

**In Terms of Black and White:**  
Politically Correct Racial Terminology  
in South Africa and the United States in the 1950's and 2000's

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# ITÄ-SUOMEN YLIOPISTO – UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

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<b>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</b> <p>This study examines political correctness in two varieties of English, American English and South African English, and in two separate eras, the 1950's and 2000's. The focus is on racial terminology, and especially on the terms concerning black and white in order to maximize the potentials of comparison. These two also represent the far ends of the continuum: whites are perceived to be on the top in the society and blacks at the bottom, and this is also reflected in language. Race is understood as a completely cultural concept since biologically races do not exist within the human species.</p> <p>The first part of the thesis deals with political correctness in language and the second continues to the background information on race, racism, and Otherness as well as provides short racial histories of the two areas concentrating on legislation and other racially tinted background information. Finally, the politically correct racial terminologies found in legislations and legally motivated documents (mainly censuses) are compared and contrasted. Legal texts contain arguably the most politically correct language there is.</p> <p>In both areas, there has been legally constructed societal institutional racism and the era of the 1950's depicts this. The current situation, on the hand, is illuminated by some affirmative action laws and the most recent censuses of both countries. The main results show some fundamental differences: in the United States, there have been and still are arrays of terms denoting the same concepts and most language users seem to be unaware of which of them are the most politically correct since the terms also change constantly. In South Africa, the racial terminology has not significantly changed since the apartheid legislation. The terminology used is also simplistic and, thus, more practical. The reason for this main difference might be that race has been discussed and problematised longer in the US, but on the other hand, they would also seem to have a more problematic relationship with race in general and with terms in particular. All of this would suggest that these two cultures, and thus also the two varieties of language, have conceptualised race differently from one another.</p>			
<b>Avainsanat – Keywords</b> political correctness, race, racial terminology, the United States, South Africa, apartheid, Jim Crow, racism, black, white			

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<b>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</b>  <p>Tämä tutkielma tutkii rodun aikaansaamaa poliittista korrektiutta kahdessa englannin varieteetissa, amerikan- ja eteläafrikanenglannissa, kahtena eri aikakautena, 1950- ja 2000-luvuilla. Keskiössä on rotuterminologia, joka viittaa mustiin ja valkoisiin, jotta varieteetteja voisi vertailla keskenään mahdollisimman paljon. Musta ja valkoinen edustavat myös jatkumon kahta äärimmäisyyttä: valkoisten oletetaan yleensä olevan yhteiskunnassa ja sitä kautta kielessä ylimpänä ja mustien alimpana. Rotu ymmärretään täysin kulttuurisena konseptina, sillä biologisesti rotuja ei ihmislaajissa ole.</p> <p>Ensin käydään läpi poliittista korrektiutta kielessä ja siitä jatketaan taustatietoihin: rodun, rasismien ja toiseuden kautta alueitten historioihin (varsinkin rodullisesti värittyneisiin lakihistorioihin) ja kaikkeen siihen, mikä liittyy näihin. Lopuksi lakiasiakirjojen (oletettavasti poliittisesti korrektein kielen domeeni) ja lakeihin nojautuvien asiakirjojen (väestönlaskennat) poliittisesti korrekkeja rotutermejä vertaillaan keskenään eri varieteettien ja eri aikakausien välillä.</p> <p>Kummallakin alueella on vallinnut lakiin merkitty yhteiskunnan tasolla vallitseva institutionaalinen rasismi ja 1950-luvun aikakausi kuvaa tätä. 2000-luvun lait ja väestönlaskennat taas yrittävät valottaa nykytilannetta. Päätulosten mukaan termejä on käytetty eri tavalla eri maissa: Yhdysvalloissa on ollut ja on edelleen enemmän termejä samoille asioille ja useimmat tuntuvat olevan epävarmoja niitten käytöstä niitten runsauden takia ja niitten vaihtumisen nopeuden takia. Etelä-Afrikassa taas on pääasiassa ollut samat termit käytössä niin apartheidin aikana kuin nykyäänkin. Etelä-Afrikan terminologia on myös minimalistinen ja siksi käytännöllisempi. Kyse voi olla siitä, että Yhdysvalloissa on problematisoitu asiaa enemmän ja kauemmin, mutta toisaalta heillä tuntuisi olevan myös paljon ongelmallisempi suhde rotuun yleisestikin ja termeihin erityisesti. Kaikki tämä viittaisi siihen, että nämä kaksi kulttuuria, ja siis myös varieteettia, ovat käsitteellistäneet rodun eri tavoin.</p>			
<b>Avainsanat – Keywords</b> poliittinen korrektiuus, rotu, rotuterminologia, Yhdysvallat, Etelä-Afrikka, apartheid, Jim Crow, rasismi, musta, valkoinen			

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## 1. Introduction

This research aims to widen the understanding on political correctness in language and especially in reference to race. In the first chapter, political correctness (PC) in language is discussed in general terms. The second chapter turns to a specific case of political correctness: race. Geographically, the focus is on South Africa and the United States, and, especially, on the differences between them. The ultimate aim is to find and compare the PC racial terms used in the past and the present. How race is discussed in legal texts is an inevitable addition, but before that we need to take a look at some background information: race is discussed historically, biologically, and as a social construct. The emphasis is on the differences between blacks and whites since that is the most prominent division racially. Also, histories of the areas are explained briefly as well as the different forms of legislations and other texts used in the study.

Political correctness (especially in language) refers to a practice where terms are replaced by “more suitable” terms. It is closely linked with taboo language, verbal hygiene, and censorship. Some substitutions are even necessary, but some make matters vague and fuzzy, and are used with a purpose of obscuring the truth. There is also the problem that if the matter itself is not resolved, a new term will not fix it. For example, if there is still (institutional) racism, the term change from *Negro* to *colored* will not help.

### 1.1 Why race

I became interested in this subject matter in 2008 when I was in Namibia on an exchange. The Southern Africans talk about race, and, indeed, almost about everything, in an extremely uncomplicated way. Their political correctness was obviously different from both the Finnish and the American culture. They would describe the third party as black, coloured, white, fat, the one with the skin problem, *etc.* However, right underneath the surface, race is a subject that can make the blood boil in an instant. For example, I was once sitting in a bar with two Finnish women and two Mauritian men, one of them black and of them of Indian origin, but who looked white. All of a sudden a drunk black Namibian man comes up to us and starts shouting insults in German (assuming we were German) and calling the only black person in our group a *sell-out* for spending time with whites.

Race affects everything in Southern Africa especially because of history. I could never escape the fact that I am white. However, I believe I was treated very differently by black Africans as a white *foreigner* than as a white *native*. My Finnishness also made a difference: There are especially many Finns and Germans in Namibia because there have been both Finnish and German missionaries in Namibia, but the Germans have also colonized Namibia from *ca.* 1884 to *ca.* 1915. As one Namibian put it when asked about the difference: “We make no difference between Germans and Finns anymore, but, well, the Germans did come here to kill us, while you [Finns] came here to save us [Christianity] (paraphrased).” Thus, I felt that Finns were liked and appreciated, and that there was some resentment towards Germans.<sup>1</sup>

As a Finn who has watched American films and TV shows all her life, I am very familiar with the language and culture that is prevalent in the US. The same types of usages have crept into Finnish language and culture, as well. For example, I once asked my Finnish hairdresser what terms she would use when speaking about a black person. I was expecting to hear *tummaihoinen* (‘dark-skinned’, probably the most PC term in Finnish) or *musta* (‘black’), but she answered: “Luultavasti *afroamerikkalainen* (‘Probably *Afro-American*’).” Obviously, Finnish black people are not American, but I did not have the heart to explain this to her. She had adopted the PC term used in the US probably because we have heard *African American* so many times on TV and know that it is a PC term (which is competing with *black* in the US).

## 1.2 Ethics

As already mentioned, race is a very sensitive subject that needs to be handled with care. Race can often be thought of as a politically incorrect topic since it does not have a salient foundation. Indeed, some writers prefer to use inverted commas *etc.* with terms that can be perceived as pejorative. For example, Pallua (2006: 7) writes: “The terms ‘native’, ‘savage’, and ‘race’ were used by the colonisers in a derogatory way to refer to the indigenous population in Africa. I am aware of the racist connotation of these terms, and therefore use mental inverted commas.” There are also writers that avoid the term *race* completely, like Hall (1999). However, race is a concept that cannot be replaced entirely because nothing else encapsulates the whole range of the meaning. Also, race does not have to be racist and it should be evident that this study is not racist. Race has been ingrained into our minds thanks to pseudoscientific racism and everything

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<sup>1</sup> I myself felt a bit ashamed of our missionary past because of some lost cultural traits and the arrogance of the Finnish church, but they did not seem to see anything bad about missionary work since Namibians are very Christian and, indeed, many of them Lutheran.

that has followed it. Hence, it should not be left aside. I would argue that it affects our thoughts on the cultural and sociological level even today although it has been largely discredited as a biological fact. Thus, I will use the term bluntly and directly.

In this paper, I am using the terms *black* and *white* written in lower-case letters as default terms for the respective races. These can both be capitalized, as well. There are also some arguably more politically correct terms in use, such as *African*, *African American*, and *Caucasian*, but these are all problematic since they do not cover all cultures. *African* is especially problematic since it can so many things. For example, African can also refer to a white or coloured South African, a Moroccan, or a Mauritian with Indian ancestry.

I am also aware that as a white Finnish woman I am looking at the black situation from the outside in, as well as researching African and American linguistic and cultural phenomena as a European person. Hence, this research has a somewhat alien perspective on the subject matter although I have lived in Namibia and the American culture is very familiar to me through the media and my education.

### 1.3 Descriptive v. prescriptive

Usually, in linguistics, there is a clear division between the prescriptive and descriptive way of thinking. Prescriptive linguistics is mostly reserved to native speakers and language teaching since language maintenance is responsible for keeping some sort of a standard alive and 'correct'. Descriptive linguistics is only concerned with what is grammatically correct and not how some form *should* be used. It aims to describe how language works in real life naturally. However, the subject of this research is straddling in between these two extremes since in this research I am studying a rather prescriptive aspect of language in a descriptive way. Also, political correctness is often language maintenance, but on the other hand, many of the terms have been changed to better describe reality. This may seem like hair splitting, but since PC language is such a complicated issue, it engulfs many aspects. For example, a blind person may be fine with the term *blind* and partially sighted people may not find anything pejorative about *people with low vision*, but when the term *visually impaired* is used, it can refer to any of these, since it is an upper category for all of them. In other words, *partially sighted* may be a mere euphemism, but *visually impaired* is not necessarily just a euphemism, but also a correct term physically. There are also terms that have been used in the past that are semantically wrong,



such as in Persian there is a term رلدنشو [roshandel] that means to live in the dark and it has referred to blind people. When this term is replaced by *blind*, it is correct since blindness does not mean darkness for most blinds. On the other hand, language does not always work along the physical facts of life since it has a history and the semantics of words can change rapidly and in many ways: the meanings can expand (generalisation) or get narrower (specialisation), or be replaced altogether for historic or factual reasons. Hence, *roshandel* might not be considered incorrect linguistically since its meaning might have changed to mean all blind people regardless of their ability to see light or not. The question is when manipulation of linguistic change, *i.e.* political correctness, is needed. And unfortunately there is no clear answer since there are no set criteria for it. Where do we draw the line? When one person is offended or maybe a million people? What if it is changed only because somebody **might** get offended? How far can we take our precautions and what kind of dangers lie in that? We all balance through these hazy terms every day sometimes successfully and other times not so much. More on all of this can be found in chapter two.

#### 1.4 Aims

The aim of this thesis is to find the politically correct racial terminologies of South Africa and the United States in the 1950's and 2000's. Hence, this study is cross-cultural and intra-lingual. My main hypothesis is that these two different cultural areas that share a language have different cultural conceptualisations of race and those differences are shown in the terminologies although they share a similar historical setting and the same language.<sup>2</sup> I also expect that political correctness has manipulated those cultural conceptualisations: I suspect that the South African terminology has been less influenced by political correctness and, thus, is simpler than the American one which has absorbed more political correctness. Research on cultural conceptualisations is very close to the weak version of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (see section 2.4.2). This study concentrates on terms, but it would be interesting to research these phenomena further later on.

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<sup>2</sup> Another country that would fit the bill is Australia, but since the actions made by whites towards the Aborigines resemble more the treatment of Native Americans than African Americans, I did not want to include Australia into the study.

## 2. Introduction to political correctness

Political correctness (PC) is a prominent feature of our language usage. We talk about it a lot but nobody seems to know what it really consists of. This chapter gives the main points of political correctness and what is meant by it in language. The aim is to widen perspectives on the subject.

Political correctness as a concept has been around already before the term was coined, but during the 1900's, political correctness has become a mighty force which cannot be overlooked and, as such, affects us all even more than before. It aroused my interest when more and more politically correct terms started to be used in the media from overseas. In movies, one can hear *flight attendants* and *fire-fighters* instead of *air hostesses* and *firemen*. I personally was against these politically correct forms because I believe that the politically incorrect forms are, or were, opaque (see section 2.4.2). A speaker does not think about men only when spoken about firemen because it is a compound word that refers to a profession and therefore to both sexes. However, I added the past tense earlier on. Nowadays, since everyone is talking about it, we cannot use the politically incorrect forms without noticing the usage. And not only us, but everyone around us notices, and so when we decide to use the politically incorrect forms, we are not just talking but we are actually making a statement. In fact, even with politically correct forms, depending on the situation, we are making a statement, as well. This means that nowadays all of us have to take sides on the matters concerned and, in order for us to do that, we need to know something about both the spoken subject and the political correctness involved. If we do not know enough, we may, for example, overgeneralise like my hairdresser (see section 1.1).

This chapter is dedicated to explaining and exploring the term *political correctness*. I will ease into PC language through constraints on language and politeness, continue with the history of the term PC, and finally discuss PC in relation to its surroundings; PC in the society. The ultimate aim is to achieve a cohesive understanding of what PC language is in order to piece it together with race and, finally, racial terminologies.

## 2.1 Constrains on language

### 2.1.1 Taboos

According to Allan and Burridge (2006: 1-3, 7-10), the word *taboo* comes from the Tongan word *tabu*. The sociologist/anthropologist (the founder of structuralistic functionalism) A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1939: 5f, cited in Allan and Burridge 2006: 2) explained that in the Polynesian languages the word means 'to forbid', 'forbidden'. The first Western people to stumble upon it were explorers, like Captain James Cook. Taboos can be found in every culture in the world and they come from the social constraints of the society. They arise when an individual's behaviour can cause discomfort, harm or injury. Tabooing behaviour occurs also when people censor their language which happens constantly. It is also important to remember that nothing is absolutely taboo. Taboos depend on circumstances, society and culture, context, place and time. For example, to most societies incest is a taboo but Pharaoh Ramses II (*fl.* 1279-1213 BCE) married several of his daughters. Hence, one community recognises a taboo that another one does not.

As Allan and Burridge (2006: 27-28) state, taboos can be broken and when done so, it has shock value and has semblance of power. It is therefore very effective to use taboos and they can be played with and taken advantage of. The question is whether we should censor taboos or trust in people's own judgement.

### 2.1.2 Forbidden terms: Censorship

*Lemon: "Both of you can go to aitch, ee, double hockey sticks."*  
*Hart of Dixie*, season 1, episode 9 (Gerstein 2011-).

Censorship is closely linked to taboos. We censor our language all the time ultimately for politeness. Allan and Burridge (2006: 17) claim that restrictions on language and weapons have the same motivation: "[...] Language censorship – like the restriction on gun ownership – is a reasonable constraint against abuses of social interaction amongst human beings." However, Allan and Burridge (2006: 13, 17-18) continue that attitudes towards both gun regulations and restrictions towards language differ from country to country. Although the US has more gun-inflicted injuries and deaths in relation to other Western countries, the NRA (National Rifle Association) supporters believe in the rightness of their cause and this outweighs any rational counterarguments. The same thing happens with language censorship: politically powerful

people can believe that "language can subvert the common good, and no amount of rational argument against their position will be accepted (Allan and Burridge 2006: 18)".

Milton (1644: 11, 37, cited in Allan and Burridge 2006: 19), the poet, believed that trust should be placed in the judgment of the individual person, and tolerance is the best policy. As Allan and Burridge state (2006: 27-28), there is no evidence that censorship protects the society but rather restricts behaviour needlessly. However, opinions differ in the question of censorship.

Andrea Millwood-Hargrave (2000: 8-11, 15-16, 28) has carried out a research with British broadcasting companies about attitudes of the public towards swear words and offensive language using multiple methods, such as one-hour depth interviews, group discussions and questionnaires. They found the following hierarchy:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Least offensive: | 1.verbal play, "baby-talk" ( <i>poo, bum</i> )   |
|                  | 2.profanities like <i>God, Jesus Christ</i>  |
|                  | 3.SMD <sup>3</sup> expressions, expletives like <i>shit, fucking hell; shag, pussy</i> |
|                  | 4.derogatory language towards minority groups like <i>poof, spastic</i>                |
| Most offensive:  | 5.racial abuse like <i>nigger, Paki</i>  |

More than half of the participants would never transmit words like *nigger, Paki, spastic, Jew, cunt* or *motherfucker*. The word *nigger* is on top of the scale with 53 percent and, in relation, the word *fuck* is only in 38 percent. In real life, though, *cunt, motherfucker, fuck*, and *wanker* are perceived more severe than *nigger*. However, the word *nigger* has climbed: when in 2000 it was ranked the fifth most severe, it was only the eleventh most severe in 1997. On every occasion, women rate these words more severely than men do.

Allan and Burridge (2006: 108-109) state that before, one could find religious and racial swear words in dictionaries but not sexually obscene words. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, this has changed. There is nowadays pressure to alter or even altogether omit political and racial definitions of words. The 21<sup>st</sup> century edition of *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal* ('Dictionary of the Afrikaans language') has simply listed racist terms (*Kaffir, Franse siekte* 'French disease, syphilis' *etc.*) and has given them label *racist* but does not define them nor give supporting

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<sup>3</sup> SMD: sex, micturition, defecation.

examples. There are also references to neutral (orthophemistic, will be further explored in 2.2.1) synonyms but this does not work the other way around: There is a path from *hoer* to *prostituut* but *prostituut* never mentions the word *hoer*. *The Encarta World English Dictionary* (1999, cited in Allan and Burridge 2006: 109) has three degrees of offensiveness: *insulting*, *offensive* and *taboo*. The word *fuck* has the warning *offensive term* 28 times and the warning *taboo offensive* seven times (when every compound and derivative is being taken into account).

### 2.1.3 Verbal hygiene

According to Crystal (1984, cited in Cameron 1995: 118), the Feminist campaign against sexist language is one of the most successful instances of prescriptivism in living memory. Deborah Cameron (1995: 119) says that verbal hygiene practices are about (1) non-linguistic matters of political belief or allegiance, (2) the nature of language itself, and (3) people's conceptualisations of language. These are, according to her, not discussed because of the oversimple assumption that "language reflects society". People do not warm up to a linguistic reform since many think it is "perverting language" and "reading things into words" (parodied in such stories as the "black coffee story", see section 2.4.1).

According to Cameron (1995: 157, 163), verbal hygiene brings out our assumptions about "reality", prevalent in our conventional language, to the surface by changed linguistic items so that they can be noticed and challenged. Context gives a meaning to a term and the crucial elements operating the context are the power relations. The main argument of Cameron's book is that there is no language without normativity. This is similar with Fish's essay title (1992, cited in Cameron 1995: 163) "There's no such thing as freedom of speech and it's a good thing too".

According to Cameron (1995: 120, 155), there are no particular theories in use (which most would use) when it comes to verbal hygiene. This makes the study of verbal hygiene difficult and varied. Some advocates of linguistic reform are liberal and some are conservatives but there are no mutual tools to work with.

## 2.2 Politeness

### 2.2.1 X-phemisms

“[...] *flat-assed poochies.*”

“*Poochies?*”

“*Can’t say bitches no more, it’s degrading.*”

Prison guards (all male, both black and white) talking about women.

*Orange Is the New Black*, season 2, episode 1 (Kohan 2013-).

According to Allan and Burridge (2006: 29-30), polite talk is at least inoffensive and at best pleasing to the hearers. Offensive talk is impolite talk. Politeness lives in context, place and time and is inseparable from these aspects. Emerson (1856: 325, cited in Allan and Burridge 2006: 30) said that politeness is the ritual of society whereas Murray (1824: 174, cited in Allan and Burridge 2006: 29) said that every polite tongue has its own rules.

Allan and Burridge (2006: 29, 34) have coined the terms *orthophemism* (Greek *ortho-* 'proper, straight, normal', *pheme* 'speaking') and *X-phemism* beside the terms *euphemism* and *dysphemism* (Greek *eu* 'good, well', *dys-* 'bad, unfavourable'). Euphemisms are sweet talking, dysphemisms are speaking offensively and orthophemisms are direct or neutral expressions. X-phemism is a collective term for all of the three. With these terms we can examine *cross-varietal synonymy* (words with basically the same denotative meaning but with different contextual purposes and connotations). Euphemisms are usually more colloquial and figurative (or indirect) than orthophemisms which in turn are typically more formal and more direct (or literal) than euphemisms. Dysphemisms are like euphemisms but dispreferred and often direct:

Preferred;

Formal and direct:

Colloquial and figurative:

Dispreferred;

Colloquial and figurative:

*Orthophemism, e.g. faeces*

*Euphemism, e.g. poo*

*Dysphemism, e.g. shit*

Allan and Burridge (2006: 31-32) explain further that dysphemisms are roughly the opposites of corresponding euphemisms. Dysphemisms have connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum and/or to people addressed. An alternative term for dispreferred expressions would be *tabooed expressions*.

According to Allan and Burridge (2006: 32-33), dysphemistic behaviour is offensive and therefore impolite. Polite behaviour is more or less the opposite of impolite behaviour and so it is *non-dysphemistic*. Again they stress the importance of the fact that this classification is wedded to context, place and time (*e.g.* the word *nigger* as a sign of camaraderie). Orthophemisms and euphemisms are the preferred alternatives to dispreferred expressions. The importance of the preferred expressions is exactly in politeness: in avoiding possible loss of face by anyone in the party. Both the use of orthophemisms and euphemisms arise from conscious or unconscious self-censoring and this coincides with politeness.

Allan and Burridge (2006: 34-35) bring forth the *middle-class politeness criterion* (MCPC) which seems to be operating when certain euphemistic or dysphemistic expressions are widely accepted as such. The criterion is as follows:

In order to be polite to a casual acquaintance of the opposite sex, in a formal situation, in a middle-class environment, one would normally be expected to use the euphemism or orthophemism rather than the dispreferred counterpart. The dispreferred counterpart would be a dysphemism.

Allan and Burridge (2006: 37, 49, 51) state that the same expressions can be used in both preferred and dispreferred ways depending on the context (*e.g.* *Jesus Christ* in a prayer and *Jesus Christ* as swearing). In other words, it is not enough to assess the default X-phemistic value of the expression itself but to put it into the context it exists in. Different X-phemisms are linked with the points of view of the ones concerned. For example, during the Iraq War (2003-present), American *liberators/invaders* are fighting Iraqi *terrorists/freedom-fighters*. Thus it is always a judgement call to choose an expression.

I would argue that racial terms are not intrinsically dysphemistic and therefore can be used without prejudice but are often associated with dispreferred connotations because of racism. For example, the term *black* is not necessarily any more dysphemistic than the term *white* but can be. This leads to a varied terminology with rapid changes within it since racism can taint the terms quickly.

### 2.2.2 *Face-threatening acts* and political correctness

Chilton and Schäffner (2002: 13, 14) state that there is a relationship between politeness and politics in general and especially in political correctness although that relationship is not etymological (*politeness* related to *polish*, *polity*; *politics* to Greek *polis*, 'state'). PC comes from

*politics* but has become a politeness phenomenon. Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1987, cited in Chilton and Schäffner 2002: 14) adapted Erving Goffman's (1967) idea of positive and negative faces in their study. Goffman's argument was that people have to balance between the need to establish "common ground" (*i.e.* positive) and the need to maintain one's territory intact (*i.e.* negative). Brown and Levinson construed *face-threatening acts* (FTAs) out of this balance and FTAs are performed through speech acts. They categorise the lexical and syntactical expressions used to mitigate speaker's FTAs. These affect the power and intimacy relations between them. This theory is especially important when talking about political discourse (politeness theory rests on a metaphorical basis that is in certain respects intrinsically political) but has also relevance in everyday life speech and has most definitely affected PC language.

According to Allan and Burridge (2006: 33), face is one's public self-image in Anglo communities (what we think others see when they see us) and one is expected to maintain (save) both one's own and everyone else's faces involved. Face can also be lost (affronted) or gained (enhanced).<sup>4</sup> FTAs may be more prevalent in dyadic conversations and PC terms are commonly used to refer to the outsider in these conversations. However, while using the PC terms about the third party, the conversationalists are signaling to one another that they are politically correct thus saving their faces.

### 2.3 History of the term *politically correct*

According to *Safire's Political Dictionary* (SPD 2008 s.v. 'political correctness'), the first time the term *politically correct* was mentioned was probably in 1793. John Ayto (in *A Century of New Words*) tracked the phrase to a toast that a John Wilson heard: "To the United States. The people of the United States' is the toast given. This is not politically correct." According to Perry (1992, cited in Allan and Burridge 2006: 91), it was also used in a court case (*Chisholm v. Georgia*) in the same year, 1793. More recently, the term was used in November 1933 in *Christian Science Monitor* that reported the following: "The results of a recent investigation of the knowledge of 65,000 Soviet pupils are candidly summed up in the official newspaper, *Izvestia*, in the following terms: 'Bad grammar, abundance of mistakes in spelling, [...]

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<sup>4</sup> I would argue that in the Finnish society embarrassment should be avoided with all costs, even more than in the Anglo communities, and hence we could actually have an even stronger need to maintain all the faces involved in a particular context than the Anglo-Saxons.



superficial and often politically incorrect information in civics and social sciences.” According to Oxford English Dictionary (s.v. ‘political correctness’), the phrase appeared also in 1939 in *New Republic* magazine.

The above mentioned usages have been literal but the true history of the term, as we understand it, started in the 1960's according to SPD (s.v. ‘political correctness’) and Allan and Burrridge (2006: 91-92) when then Chairman Mao Zedong titled his thought as ”Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?” in *The Little Red Book* in 1963. The Maoist and Communist phrase ”correct thinking” was then translated into English as *political correctness* and *politically correct*.

According to SPD and Thorne (1993 s.v. ‘PC’), in the 1970's, liberal and progressive activists started using the term, as well. The earliest one of these to do this was Toni Cade in his 1970 anthology the *Black Woman*: ”A man cannot be politically correct and a chauvinist too.” In 1975 also Karen DeCrow, then the president of the *National Organization for Women* (USA) used the term. This way Feminists adopted the term, as well. Already in the early 70's, feminists paid attention to the sexism in language and by the end of the decade many sexist words were taboo (e.g. *-man* ending words). The taboo status was eventually expanded to terms involved with racial and heterosexist stereotypes, Euro-centrism in historical studies and any other kind of discrimination (see intersectionality in section 3.3).

According to Allan and Burrridge (2006: 92), amidst all this, also the Conservatives in the United States started to use the term and stripped the irony that the Left had given it out of the term. This is when PC started to evolve its image problem although it has problems naturally, as well, just by being *politically* correct. The result of this is that PC is offending to both parties of politics in the US and the term was and still is truly double-edged.

In the late 1980's, according to Cameron (1995: 126), the term became controversial on college campuses (in North America) because the so-called *Political Correctness Movement* evolved there. It combined the Maoist tradition, feminism, anti-racism and other liberationist doctrines to create a new post-Marxist leftist orthodoxy.

According to Thorne (1993 s.v. ‘PC’), PC's beginnings go back to the work of the post-structuralists, as well, and especially to the deconstruction of Jacques Derrida. One deconstructionist notion is that cultural messages are not free of ideology, assumptions of power

relations or the reinforcement of orthodoxies, all of which are expressed unwittingly through choice of language. This affected the feminists (see sections 2.1.3 and 2.4.1).

According to Cameron (1995: 127), in the late 1980's and early 1990's PC finally hit the media and became a part of our everyday speech. After media's influence the keywords of the PC phenomenon have undergone a process of *discursive drift*: the meanings have started to drift away from the earlier and narrower senses (*e.g.* gender, which refers to the cultural sex, is starting to become the PC term for biological sex.).

According to Allan and Burrige (2006: 91), in the 1990's PC became a buzz term: It was everywhere, it was a trend. In Australia the term was *polcor* for a while and, in the beginning, people were using *p.c.*, as well but these never really caught on and nowadays the most used abbreviation is *PC* (and that is why I use it, as well). Robin Lakoff's (2000: 94-5, cited in Allan and Burrige 2006: 91) research of these terms in news databases in the US confirms that the peak of the usage of the term was between 1991 and 1995. In the late 1990's media had settled down a bit and attention to PC had died down.

Also, PC has been parodied by various agents and institutions. In 1992, *Democratic National Convention* in New York parodied PC terms in *The Official Politically Correct Dictionary and Handbook* and Peter Mullen wrote *The Politically-Correct Gospel* (2006). Garner wrote a book called *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories* (1994). Here is an excerpt from the *Three Little Pigs*:

"At the house of bricks, the wolf again banged on the door and shouted, 'Little pigs, little pigs, let me in!' This time in response, the pigs sang songs of solidarity and wrote letters of protest to the United Nations. By now the wolf was getting angry at the pigs' refusal to see the situation from the carnivore's point of view. So he huffed and puffed, and huffed and puffed, then grabbed his chest and fell over dead from a massive heart attack brought on from eating too many fatty foods. The three little pigs rejoiced that justice had triumphed and did a little dance around the corpse of the wolf. Their next step was to liberate their homeland. They gathered together a band of other pigs who had been forced off their lands. This new brigade of *porcinistas* attacked the resort launchers and slaughtered the cruel wolf oppressors, sending a clear signal to the rest of the hemisphere not to meddle in their internal affairs. Then the pigs set up a model socialist democracy with free education, universal health care, and affordable housing for everyone.  
*Please note: The wolf in this story was a metaphorical construct. No actual wolves were harmed in the writing of the story.*"

Garner 1994: 11-12.

With this messy history behind it and media mixing it up even more, there is no straightforward definition for the term *political correctness*. As we saw, it is entangled in euphemisms, verbal

hygiene and politeness, and even ridicule. Next we will look at how PC is connected to the society.

## 2.4 Political correctness and the surroundings

### 2.4.1 Political correctness in relation to politics

Allan and Burrridge (2006: 100-101) emphasise that although PC-driven language may seem equal to euphemism, the difference between them is that **PC language is politically motivated** (or at least should be to be called PC). However, they can overlap. Peggy Noonan (Noonan 1998: 369, quoted in Allan and Burrridge 2006: 100-101), a journalist and a former speech writer for Ronald Reagan, claimed that words had been hijacked and reinterpreted: "I wish I could rescue them and return them to their true meanings." For example, she would have wanted to use the word *gay* meaning 'happy, cheerful'. Many people complain when the meanings of words change and therefore people, according to them, cannot call things by their "right names". Our self-centredness comes through in the notion that our own linguistic preferences are something natural and correct. Allan and Burrridge argue that this is why people are usually very reluctant to change their linguistic behaviour. Despite this, PC has been highly effective in changing people's linguistic habits, especially in written language (Pauwels 1993: 115, cited in Allan and Burrridge 2006: 101). In particular, the implementation of non-sexist guidelines has been strikingly successful.

According to Allan and Burrridge (2006: 101-102), many countries have imposed legal restrictions to make race discrimination and vilification an offense: Formal speech codes on some US campuses, some publishers forbidding words considered sexist, racist, homophobic and anti-Semitic<sup>5</sup>. Some people have even been sent to sensitivity workshops. According to Loury (1993, cited in Allan and Burrridge 2006: 102), what PC has created is a climate of *tacit censorship*.

Allan and Burrridge (2006: 45, 102-105) continue that we do not just abandon politically incorrect words but *we quickly drop also homonyms of taboo terms* and there are two reasons for this: (1) There is relative salience in taboo terms. There is evidence that unanalysed words are stored in and/or accessed from different places of the brain than other words (*e.g.* Tourette's syndrome, senile dementia). (2) People will not risk appearing to use a dysphemism when none

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<sup>5</sup> It is noteworthy that only one ethnic minority has been mentioned separately, *i.e.* the Jews.

was in mind. These are the reasons why leg and breast became dark and white meat (cooked fowl) in the Victorian era and white or black coffee has become coffee with or without milk (although Cameron [1995: 117] says this is just an urban myth). Old names that were not thought of before get changed, as well: *Darkie toothpaste* became *Darlie toothpaste* (and in the Finnish context, Brunberg manufactures chocolates that used to be called *Neekerinsuukot*, *Negro's Kisses* but that have plainly been known as *Brunberg's Kisses* since 2001). Words are changing: David Howard, an employee in the Washington, DC, mayoral office, used the word *niggardly* in 1999. He finally resigned after the uproar the incident caused (see section 6.1). If people start to connect words such as *niggardly* and, for example, *nitty-gritty* with the word *nigger*, then it does not matter what linguistic facts suggest. Though etymologically these words have nothing to do with each other, it is of no consequence. Also, the words *fuk* 'sail' and *feck* 'purpose' are dying or have already died out thanks to their phonetic resemblance with the word *fuck*.



Image 1. Brunberg's kisses (box from 2104) and Spanish Conguito sweets (chocolate-covered peanuts; bought in 2012).

The same phenomenon can be seen in Finnish, as well, with words like *panna*, 'to place, to set' which is constantly exchanged with its synonyms *laittaa*, *pistää* and *asettaa* because *panna* has become to mean more and more frequently 'to fuck, to screw'.

Allan and Burridge (2006: 105-106) believe that the reason for this overreaction of words is in our society. There is a lot of anxiety with threats of weapons of mass destruction, deadly viruses, global warming and even diminishing sperm counts: "A large segment of contemporary western

society is riven with guilt and shame for subjugating, enslaving, marginalizing and, in some cases, extinguishing other peoples (Allan and Burrridge 2006: 106)”. We do not have conventionalised strategies for repentance and therefore we adopt new politically correct attitudes, or at least words, ”to negotiate the linguistic minefield (Allan and Burrridge 2006: 106)”.

Allan and Burrridge (2006: 110-111) emphasise that it may seem that orthophemism and euphemism attend to the wants of others, while dysphemism satisfies the speaker's wants and needs but it is far more complex than that. PC language has the same motivation as orthophemism and euphemism and that is the effort to be polite and inoffensive. Therefore, much of PC language is euphemistic. However, *words get politicised*. Euphemisms are usually changed because of social etiquette whereas, in the PC arena, the terms become political in-your-face euphemisms with an attitude. Finally they stress the fact that PC is mostly self-imposed.

#### 2.4.2 Political correctness and Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

*Every word is a prejudice*

Friedrich Nietzsche 1880 (cited in Dictionary.com).

According to Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (linguistic relativity hypothesis, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf), our mother tongue, and in this case mother dialect, determines how we perceive the world and reality (the strong version). There are also milder versions of this hypothesis: not determine but affect in varying degrees (the weak version). According to *The Official Politically Correct Dictionary and Handbook* (s.v. ‘Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis), all human culture is fabricated by language and this means that before we can change a pattern of behaviour, we have to change the terms which relate to it.

“Civility” (*i.e.* ”sensitivity”) is a prominent theme in the more recent debate on PC. Cameron (1995: 134-6, 140, 143, 335-6) brings forth two people with their apt comments on PC language: Simon Hoggard believes that BBC's “sensitivity” guidelines are ”mostly [...] common sense. Now that fire brigades are appointing women, 'firefighters' isn't PC but is just accurate.” Barbara Ehrenreich wrote in her essay *The Challenge for the Left* (1992) that ”[i]f you outlaw the term 'girl' instead of 'woman' you're not going to do a thing about the sexist attitudes underneath [...] There is a tendency to confuse verbal purification with real social change [...] Now I'm all for verbal uplift [...] [but] verbal uplift is not the resolution” (Cameron

1995: 335-6). Deborah Cameron responds to this with a claim that the exact intention of the prescription of 'woman' rather than 'girl' is to change behaviour. This changing of acceptable public behaviour is one of the ways one can go about changing prevailing attitudes.

The idea that if we use the *man*-ending, subconsciously, if not consciously, we think that it means only men and that woman is only a derivative of man (etymologically this is the case), then that is also the reality that we perceive. Opponents would argue that **compound words are perceived as one unity** and not as two words so that to speakers the *-man* suffix would not affect the word anymore. For example, some women feel offended by being *Madam Chairman* and prefer *Madam Chair* but others do not care because they understand chairman to be an idiom denoting the concerned office (Allan and Burridge 2006: 99).

Political correctness can also be seen as manipulated cultural conceptualisations. Language can be seen as a 'collective memory bank' (Frank 2003, wa Thiong'o 1986, cited in Sharifian 2011: 39) for cultural conceptualisations and Sharifian (2011: 44) adds that language can be viewed as a primary mechanism, although not the only one, for communicating cultural conceptualisations. He calls language and cultural conceptualisations the two intrinsic aspects of cultural cognition. English, he (*op. cit.* 94) considers, is a language which can be used to communicate various systems of cultural conceptualisations. His example is from Australia. In Australian English, one could say: "This land is mine." In Aboriginal English, it would be closer to: "This land is me." Now, obviously, political correctness comes from within the culture in question, but it is often imposed on the language community by an official institution or a particular minority. Hence, I would consider political correctness to often be a manipulating force that change cultural conceptualisations (see section 1.4).

## 2.5 What is politically correct language?

There's a condition in combat. [...] In the First World War, that condition was called *shell-shock*. Simple, honest, direct language, two syllables: *shell-shock*. Almost sounds like the guns themselves. [...] The Second World War came along and the very same combat condition was called *battle fatigue*. Four syllables now. Takes a little longer to say, doesn't seem to hurt as much: *fatigue* is a nicer word than *shock*. [...] Then we had the war in Korea, 1950 [...] and the very same combat condition was called *operational exhaustion*. Hey, we're up to eight syllables now! And the humanity has been squeezed completely out of the phrase, it's totally sterile now. [...] Then, of course, came the war in Vietnam. [...] The very same condition was called *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*. Still eight syllables, but we've added a hyphen and the pain is completely buried under jargon. [...] I bet ya, if we had still been calling it *shell-shock*, some of those Vietnam veterans might've gotten the attention they needed at the time.

George Carlin. 1990. *Parental Advisory: Explicit Lyrics: 'Euphemisms'*.

As Allan and Burridge (2006: 90) state, political correctness can be perceived as brainwashing or good manners. Some say it is useless and others that it is indispensable. Political correctness is related to taboos and censoring. Usually people are very reluctant to change their linguistic behaviour just because someone says it has to be done. People can perceive that as manipulation and a violation of their rights. PC is exactly something that is dictating changes into our language usages and yet PC is spreading like wildfire: it has been very successful in getting people to change their linguistic behaviour.

Allan and Burridge (2006: 94-96) continue that political correctness has been taken to the everyday parlance and into more contexts and hence its meanings have shifted away from the original one. PC is nowadays referring, rather than to a **political position**, to behaviour and especially **verbal behaviour**. The emphasis is now more on **civil gentility** and **etiquette**. Political correctness has become to mean politeness and good manners, not legally enforceable fairness or tolerance like it was originally. Nevertheless, PC terms are supposed to be the preferred or "correct" terms to use and therefore are not just euphemisms but can also be orthophemisms. These preferred terms have replaced (and are still replacing) dispreferred terms but it is questionable whether every word switched was actually discriminatory or pejorative in the first place. This means that **politically correct has become completely entangled with euphemism, orthophemism and jargon** and no-one knows what terms are correct and how far one should go.

According to Cameron (1995: 145), many definitions of PC stress that PC terms are about calling groups by the names they prefer. For example, many non-heterosexuals prefer *queer* to *gay* and *lesbian* because *queer* includes groups that the terms *gay* and *lesbian* do not. PC language challenges us deliberately to acknowledge the assumptions on which our language is

operating. Also, PC terms highlight deliberately certain aspects of a group's identity. For example, the term *African American* emphasises the historical roots rather than genetics or colour like the term *black* does. Therefore, a lot more is involved than just civility and sensitivity.

As Allan and Burridge (2006: 97, 100), state, euphemisms can be deliberately provoking or stress only certain perspectives of entities: death as a journey (*pass away*), or as a beginning of a new life (*to go to a better place*). PC-inspired euphemism tries to get people to challenge prejudices embodied in language. The problem is that people are often oblivious to the political message and that is why the prejudices do not go away, and the only effect, I would argue, is a different word: **If the attitudes and prejudices are still there, new words do not matter, they are just band-aids for something that would need stitches.** We are coining words all the time for certain things because the matter underneath the word does not change and therefore the new words in time will get the same negative connotations as the former words. Allan and Burridge (2006: 100) gives us the poor countries of the world as an example: They have been called *backward* at first, then in the late 1940's *underdeveloped*, and in the 1950's *less developed* or *lesser developed*. In the 1960's they became *developing countries* and after that *emerging* or *emergent countries/economies*. If one wants to dodge this minefield, they can use geographical labels like the *Third World* (but as we know, this term is getting politically incorrect, as well). More recently, one has been able to simply say *The South*, which is quite vague and can be mistaken pretty easily, or then, for example, *HIPC* (*highly indebted poor countries*). (However, due to recent economic events, Greece and other Mediterranean countries could be called HIPC, as well, but are hardly considered a part of the Third World.) As we will see later in the results, racial terminologies act the same way creating a continuum of PC terms turned incorrect.

According to Cameron (1995: 121, 131), some say that the intention does not have to be racist even if some are using words that are considered racist. They accuse others of “reading things in”. On the other hand, they can also say that words *do* have meanings independent of speakers's intentions and that PC is something that perverts these time-honoured meanings. PC is, therefore, an attack against language and the possibility of communication. They are not completely wrong: there are overreactions in PC language (like the changing of words that are not really discriminative nor etymologically sexist: *e.g. history, person*) but I would argue that this is also a very effective way of justifying discrimination.



As Allan and Burridge (2006: 98) point out, the problem with euphemisms is that they are very good at blurring reality and can be used to deceive: Many people hate euphemisms because they are thinking of the euphemisms that turn *murder* into *arbitrary deprivation of life*, *accidents* into *anomalies* and *attacking* into *aggressive defending* like in *The Official Politically Correct Dictionary and Handbook* (s.v. ‘murder’, ‘accident’, attacking’). These euphemisms are perceived as jargon intended to befuddle the hearer. Therefore, because of the pejorative connotations of these terms, both the word euphemism and PC language is in decline. However, the process is ongoing even when it is not called PC.

Furthermore, Allan and Burridge (2006: 99) state that the things that confuse the interpretation of the terms even more are the contexts in which euphemisms and PC terms are used. Terms are never correct to everyone and this is why we have so many terms flying around. Those *hearing-impaired* people, who identify with *Deaf Pride*, prefer the term *deaf*. It is all about *identification* with these kinds of terms. Also, some women feel offended by being *Madam Chairman* and prefer *Madam Chair* but others do not care because they understand chairman to be an idiom denoting the concerned office. According to Allan and Burridge (2006: 99), this is one of the reasons why it is so difficult to legislate against “words that wound”. **Language is vague and full of ambiguity and this fuzziness will always make prescriptive speech codes difficult to enforce.**

New ideas and terms can also backfire, as Allan and Burridge (2006: 100) point out. There is the counter effect: when extreme terms are used, they usually provoke the opposite extreme and therefore that end of the spectrum becomes more prominent together with the original provocation. Hence, **alongside with PC etiquette we have a flourishing lexicon of bigotry.**

According to Cameron (1995: 151), many have paralleled PC with George Orwell’s *Newspeak*, a concept he uses in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The point of Newspeak was to make this new language the official one and that way prevent people from communicating subversive thoughts to one another, or even to themselves, and to wipe out the real history and truth and to substitute the reality with something else by propaganda. Also Allan and Burridge (2006: 93) bring forth the aims of *Newspeak*: to reduce the number of words in the English language to eliminate ideas deemed dangerous. If there were no words available, “thoughtcrime” would be impossible.

## 2.6 Thoughts on political correctness

*Political correctness is the quality of being politically correct: Political correctness was intended to erase the discrimination that exists in language.*  
*Cambridge International Dictionary of English. 1995. s.v. 'political'.*

Many have defined PC. Noam Chomsky (1991) called it the "healthy expansion of moral concern". Michael Barnard (1991) saw it as a "new strain of ideological virus". For Morris Dickstein (1993: 554) it was "dictatorship of the well-meaning and pure of heart" and for Eugene Goodheart (1993: 551) a "doctrine of opportunism". Ruth Perry (1992: 71) has called it a "will-o'-the-wisp on the murky path of history". (All quoted in Allan and Burridge 2006: 90.)

Nietzsche has said: "Every word is a prejudice". Egonsson (2007: 62-63) states that this can inspire to think that a huge number of our words have a worldview absorbed in them (one could ask which content words do not have). Many times this worldview is crucial when considering the aesthetic value of a word. Take the words *whore* and *courtesan*. There is a big difference between them socially, although they are denotatively synonymous. The usage depends on whether one wants to use beautiful (or beautified) words or ugly words. According to Egonsson, the beautified words bring back the original meaning. (Egonsson has used Harry Martinson's novel *Vägen till Klockrike* [1948] and its character Ahlbom, who prefers to use *courtesan* instead of a *whore*, as an inspiration for his ideas.) However, the notions of beauty are very subjective and, as such, difficult, if not impossible, to define. Also, Egonsson automatically assumes that originality is a virtue.

Mänty and Saarikoski (1991:19-21) discuss feminist words like *DWM's* (*dead white males*) and *womyn* (the other form for *women* invented at Sarah Lawrence University, California). They also ask whether science is going to be freed from men in power with PC or is PC going to deprave science. Most importantly in my opinion, though, **they talk about how tolerance can become intolerance**. Mänty and Saarikoski have translated *politically correct* as 'good guys' and it is used in the title of the article: 'The good guys of science'. The translation refers to the fact that politically correct people are formally and possibly *only* formally polite and therefore good. In other words, one can detect certain sarcasm in the translation.

We can ask whether PC language has succeeded in its aim as described in the definition above. I would argue that although the intentions are well-meaning and that PC language does have its

place in today's world, it has also brought a lot of puzzling and fuzzy terms that cause a lot of trouble. It is very easy to go to extremes with political correctness: PC terms can be used very effectively in obscuring the truth. However, political correctness is here to stay. Next, we will look at racial terms more closely, a category where PC terms are welcomed and even loved, overused, and used especially for one's own aims and purposes.

### 3. Race

*All is race; there is no other truth.*

Benjamin Disraeli (1847: ch 20, quoted in Horsman 1981: 62).

*Race* is one of the most controversial terms in this thesis. It must be used with care because it is connected to the race theories of the past and thus can be perceived as a pejorative term. However, it is very difficult to ignore the term and simply use substitutions like *ethnicity* because these two terms are not necessarily synonyms although they may be used as such.

#### 3.1 *Race* as a term

According to OED (s.v. ‘race’, ‘ethnic’), *race* is ‘a group of people, animals, or plants, connected by common descent or origin’. The term *ethnic* first gives the following definition: “Pertaining to nations not Christian and Jewish; Gentile<sup>6</sup>, pagan, heathen.” This is the oldest form of its usage. The second definition is: “Pertaining to race; peculiar to a race or nation – pertaining to or having common racial, cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics, esp. designating a racial or other group within a larger system; hence (U.S. coll.), foreign, exotic.” In 1580, *race* came to signify ‘the great divisions of mankind’, and in 1600 a ‘tribe, nation or people considered of common stock’. *Race* can also be used to refer to either of the sexes (as distinct from the other; see intersectionality in section 3.3). According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (s.v. ‘race’), the term *race* originates from the Italian word *razza* which is of unknown origin.

As can also be seen in this, *ethnicity* or *ethnic* are often used as a euphemism for *race*. It does not have many definitions in dictionaries and the ones that can be found come through *race*: in OED (s.v. ‘ethnic’), there is no modern update, and in *Cambridge Dictionary* it is said to mean ‘relating to a particular race of people’. According to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (s.v. ‘ethnic’), in Greek *ethnos* means ‘nation’. According to *Online Etymology Dictionary* (s.v. ‘ethnic’), the sense of ‘peculiar to a race or nation’ was attested in 1851 and the word regained its original meaning ‘different cultural groups’ in 1935. This causes confusion since the terms do also have separate meanings. For example, a person can be black, Ovambo, and Namibian, or a person can be black and American. The first example has a

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<sup>6</sup> *Gentile* means ‘non-Jewish’ and it comes up on occasion in texts dealing with race. (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, s.v. ‘gentile’.) Judeo-Christianity has been elevated from other belief systems in this definition, and this thinking still exists since *ethnic* can refer to the more exotic cultures only. Jewishness is separated often especially in the US.

different label for their race, ethnicity and nationality but the second one has race and ethnicity combined as a repercussion of slavery. A third example could be a white Finn whose race, ethnicity and nationality (and very often language) can all be perceived as wrapped in the same label; Finnish. South African coloureds are also an interesting case, since they were taught to be white, and hence have white Afrikaans and English accents and do not necessarily speak any other languages. They often have an in-between identity with their non-white and non-black skin, and their white language and culture. So, are they ethnically or racially coloured? This is the reason why we need all of these terms in both the society and especially in this study. Sometimes ethnicity is not enough, but in some other contexts it might be. Fenton (1986: viii, cited in Blakemore and Boneham 1994: 7) reminds us, though, that an emphasis on the differences between ethnic groups can be a divide-and-rule tactic, but also that in some contexts it is necessary to pay a full attention to differences within broader groupings.

According to *Online Etymology Dictionary* (s.v. 'race'), there was a term in Old English, *þeode*, which referred to both 'race' and 'language', and used as a verb, *geþeodan*, it meant 'to unite, to join'. The dictionary finds many related terms, such as near-synonyms for *race*: *genus*, *caste*, *origin*, *kin*, *-kind* as in *mankind/humankind*), *tribe*, *breed*, *lineage*, *line*, *gens*, *Dutch* (comes from *þeodisc* meaning 'belonging to the people'), *phylon*, *genus*, *ethno-*, *phylum*, *gene*, *nation*, *genitive*, *hade*, *blood*, *world*, *band*, *mannish*, *volk* (and *birth*, *heterogeneous* 'different+kind', *homogeneous* 'same+kind'); for mixed race: *metis*, *mestizo*, *mulatto*, *creole*, *mongrel* (pejorative), *cholo* (pejorative, but used also positively like e.g. *nigger*), *half-breed* (pejorative), *half-blooded* (pejorative), *half-caste* (pejorative), *quarter*.

Blumenbach used the term *varieties* instead of *race* and Lamarck used *families*. Cuvier and Prichard with Kant used *race*. (Goldberg 1993: 64.) In South Africa the term *volk* has been used (e.g. Dubow 1995). However, *Population* is now the preferred (and the most correct) term according to at least South African officials and also some gene researchers (see section 3.5 and official South African documents, e.g. the Population Registration Act of 1950 and Census of 2011).

### 3.2 Otherness

*Is this an inferior race – so inferior as to be only fit for chains?*

James Freeman Clarke 1843: 24 (quoted in McPherson 1964: 144).

The concept of the Other is originally from Emmanuel Lévinas who was a French philosopher. He was also Jewish. He wrote about Otherness in many of his books, including, for example, *Le Temps et l'Autre* (1948, *Time and the Other*), *Totalité et Infini: essai sur l'extériorité* (1961, *Totality and Infinity*), and *Humanisme de l'Autre Homme* (1974, *Humanism of the Other*).

Liebkind (1988: 30, 32, 37-40) explains how the demand for difference was (and is) on the rise among social groups. The minorities have a right to be different. Liebkind understands the concept of *minority* as a group that has less power than the majority group. In other words, the minority does not necessarily have to be numeric. A perfect example of this kind of a minority is the blacks in South Africa. Also, women are sometimes referred to as a minority. She defines an ethnic group as a cultural group of mutual history with a common biological or linguistic background. According to Wilpert (1989, cited in Liebkind 1988: 38), the concept of ethnicity encapsulates both cultural identity and ethnic identity in sociology. Liebkind emphasises that identifying with a certain group is the first step of becoming a part of that group. Finally, when the person is in the group, they absorb the group ideology. Ideologies lead to political actions. People usually belong to a variety of groups at the same time and some of these are more important than others to the individuals, respectively.

Liebkind (1988: 64-67, 72) explains how the subjective and objective sides of identity have to be separated. The subjective side refers to the individual's own perceptions of their identity. The objective side refers to the features that can be seen by outsiders. This leads to the fact that an identity can be adopted, attained, or given. An involuntary, given identity can be based on one's skin colour, but one can also adopt an identity through their skin colour (see *e.g.* passing in section 4.2.2). Identities can also be divided into personal and social identities. The personal side differentiates the person from the other group members, but the social aspects are mutual to all the individuals that share a group. It is also important to note that identities change all the time. The social identity of a person consists of all the groups that they belong to. Liebkind also adds that according to many researchers, identifying with many different groups decreases divisions of people to "us" and "them".

Ashmore and Del Boca (1981, cited in Liebkind 1988: 74-80) explain stereotype as a depersonalised picture of a member of a certain group. This means that the individuals of a group are not usually seen as individuals very easily. Stereotyping is also seeing similarities between the individuals of a certain group and differences between different groups even when they do not exist. However, these similarities and differences can be positive, negative, or, indeed, more or less neutral in nature. In other words, not all stereotypes are negative. The concept of stereotype is from Lippman's book *Public Opinion* (1922, cited in Liebkind 1988: 78). Stereotypes are closely linked to prejudices that can be seen differently in social psychology. According to one perception, prejudiced people think completely differently from tolerate people. The cognitive view denies this and holds all kinds of classifying thinking as prejudiced. (Billig 1985, cited in Liebkind 1988: 79.) In 1957, J.S. Bruner (cited in Liebkind 1988: 79) proved that people see what they expect to see. Liebkind continues that prejudices are seen as undesirable, but, also, inevitable because people's processes of classification are stereotyping in nature.

According to Liebkind (1988: 31, 35, 41), some ethnic groups can form into a specific social class (e.g. blacks and whites in South Africa). She also states how a social class can develop its own culture. Liebkind, therefore, differentiates between a so-called "deep culture" and a culture that has developed through belonging to a particular social class. I would argue that social classes usually have their own cultures and for them not to have one would be surprising. At the very least, different social classes would seem to emphasise different aspects of the so-called "deep culture".

As Liebkind (1988: 49-52, 102-103) states, minorities can either assimilate or acculturate (adapt) into the majority, or not. It can be beneficial but it can also be hampered by the majority. The minority may also want to maintain their own ways. However, the minority can also be forced to assimilate. Different groups can be divided into secure and insecure ones. An insecure majority avoids comparisons to a minority. Its members identify strongly to their group and their own needs, and, in reverse, do not concern themselves with the needs of a minority. A secure majority can afford to take into account the needs of a minority because they do not feel threatened. The members do not identify that strongly to their group. An insecure minority compares itself to the majority in every way and believes to be inferior. The majority represents the ideal and the norm to which aspire. A secure minority highlights and cherishes its differences and demands recognition to the special aspects of the group. The identification rate

is high and prejudices are defied with a strong self-esteem. Related to this, Appiah (1990: 3-17, cited in Goldberg 1993: 72) suggests that racial self-identification is not a form of self-degradation but a mode of self-advancement. I would say it can be both depending on whether one belongs to a secure or an insecure community. Liebkind (1988: 113, 116-117) states that cultural diversity can be seen as a threat to the unity of the society. Apparently in this case the majority is an insecure one. In many countries, the main ideology recognises the insuperability of the unified national culture. This keeps the prejudices alive. An interesting aspect of this is also the relations between aboriginal peoples and immigrants (or imported labour force) which are both often minorities in a particular country (*e.g.* blacks and Native Americans in the US). As we can see later, both the white majority in the US and the white government (majority via power although a minority *per se*) in South Africa during the 1950's were highly insecure and so were the black minorities. However, as time went on, all sides became more secure which can be seen from the legislation.

According to Hall (1999: 160), identities are layered within us and thus we may have a racial, ethnic, national, and class identities (among others) all of them giving us different perceptions of ourselves. Along with these lines we also Other people that are not one of "us". This can lead to a racialisation of the Other. These different identities are also related to intersectionality (see section 3.3).

According to Saifullah Khan (1982: 209), ethnic identity is neither fixed nor single stranded. Indeed, it is flexible and it shifts on different levels according to situation and context. It is not constant but changes collectively (and individually, as well) over time. Blakemore and Boneham (1994: 7-8) add that self-identification is the key element of ethnic identity. They conclude that racial and ethnic identities emerge from the interaction that goes on between minority and majority groups.

W. E. B. DuBois (1903) in his writing describes what it is like to be the Other. He talked about blacks in the US been born with a veil and how they have the gift of second sight. This refers to his theory of the double-consciousness: blacks can see the American society from both the black and white perspective when whites only have one sight. This double self is both a blessing and a curse.



James Baldwin in an interview (in *The Negro and the American Promise*) was shocked when the Attorney General Robert Kennedy could not understand that he would have problems with sending his nephew to Cuba, as he said, “to liberate the Cubans in the defense of a government [...] which cannot liberate me.” In another interview during the race-riots (1963, *Florida Forum*), he stated: “They think that I live in a segregated society, white people don’t seem to realize that they live in a segregated society; that **we** do. And that the white child is really just as victimized by this peculiar medieval system as any Negro child. And what is worse for the white child, the white child doesn’t know it.” According to him, blacks are taught to despise themselves in a country where there are two separate worlds. When asked about blacks in literature, he answers: “I, speaking out as a Negro, have been described by **you** for hundreds of years and now **I** can describe **you**. And that’s part of the panic.”

### 3.3 Racism

*I consider men who are unacquainted with the savages, like young women who have read romances, and have as improper an idea of the Indian character in the one case, as the female has of real life in the other. The philosopher, weary of the vices of refined life, thinks to find perfect virtue in the simplicity of the unimproved state.*

Hugh Henry Brackenridge, *National Gazette*, Feb 6, 1792: 127-128, 131-132

(quoted in Horsman 1981: 98).

*Woman Is the Nigger of the World*

John Lennon and Yoko Ono. 1972.

According to Safire’s Political Dictionary (2008, s.v. ‘racism’), *racism* was first coined in 1936 by Lawrence Dennis in his book *The Coming American Fascism*. It originally meant “an assumption that an individual’s abilities and potential were determined by his biological race, and that some races were inherently superior to others; now, a political-diplomatic accusation of harboring or practicing such theories”. It is a shortening of *racialism* and it was first used in accordance with Jews. Jews were made into a race by anti-Semites in the 19<sup>th</sup> century who foresaw that secularity was increasing. Religion was losing its force (although it might debatable as to which extent and, as we will see, e.g. apartheid is highly influenced by neo-Calvinism; in section 4.1.2) and the anti-Semites needed another justification for their hate. Adolf Hitler made this into a practice with his “master race” ideology. After the Second World War, according to the lexicographer Anne Soukhanov (in SPD s.v. ‘racism’), citations of racism grew thin until the late 1950’s when references to US racism (particularly the Southern one) appeared and peaked in the 1960’s. Racism can be directed towards any race, ethnicity, or nationality. Interestingly, some African American leaders discussed whether Barack Obama

was “black enough”, meaning closely identified with political issues of blacks, since he has a black Kenyan father and a white American mother. “Acting black” refers to appearing to be the stereotype of what many whites expect of blacks.

It is important to remember that there is racism within the oppressed, as well. For example, Kemiläinen (1998: 213) states that East Asiatics and northern Indians had the same attitude to a darker complexion as Europeans did. Also, in the United States, European (especially from the South and East) immigrant workers were discriminated against, but they, in turn, discriminated against blacks just like all the other non-blacks. Kemiläinen (1998: 227) adds that as the old race theories were abandoned, a new method of classification was emerging: gene frequencies. These were not supposed to form races, but Kemiläinen fears that this is happening.

Crenshaw coined the term *intersectionality* in 1989 which can also be called the *matrix of domination*. Crenshaw (1993: 1242) especially focused on the interrelation of race and gender, or more poignantly, racism and sexism: “Although racism and sexism readily intersect in the lives of real people, they seldom do in feminist and antiracist practices.” This all revolves around intersecting identities (all of them: class, sexual orientation *etc.*) that we all have, but that are often dealt with separately. With this logic also the multiple forms of discrimination intersect contributing to systematic injustice. In Ecofeminism, the domination of women has been juxtaposed with the domination of nature which brings us to the *logic of domination*, *i.e.* “a structure of argumentation which leads to a justification of subordination.” An alleged characteristic (*e.g.* rationality; men are rational, whilst women lack rationality) usually grounds the justification. (Warren 1990.) All of these should be held in mind when discussing race and racism because the larger context may be a more complex one than initially thought. In this study, we are actually focusing mainly on *institutional racism* which refers to racism on a larger and more systematic scale. Apartheid and the Jim Crow legislation are perfect examples of this. However, it is also interesting to see whether intersectionality plays any part in them.

### 3.4 Scientific racism: race theories of the past

*History and observation both teach that [...] the Mongol, the Malay, the Indian, and the Negro, are now and have been in all ages and places inferior to the Caucasian.*

Josiah C. Nott 1844: 16, 28-35 (quoted in Horsman 1981: 116).

The 18<sup>th</sup> century changed the world through *Radical Enlightenment*. As Bernal (1987: 169, 27) puts it, Newton came from “a world of astrology, alchemy and magic, [and] left a world in which these were no longer respectable (*op. cit.* 169)”. The changes commenced in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with all of its social, economic and political transformations. Capitalism triumphed in England and Holland, and statism in France. The late-17<sup>th</sup> century England also brought about racism based on skin colour with their twin policies of extermination of the Native Americans and enslavement of African blacks. Locke, Hume and other English philosophers were influenced by this racism and they, in turn, influenced in particular Germans, like Blumenbach. Supposedly, the same ideas travelled further north, as well, affecting Linnaeus.

Bernal (1987: 28-29) continues that the Ancient Greeks were, to use modern terms, very nationalistic and despised other peoples. Aristotle spoke about a Hellenic superiority. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the *Romantic Movement* engulfed Northern Europe. All human studies, and especially history, adapted the paradigm of races. Race mixing became undesirable, if not indeed disastrous. The Romantics saw Greece as the epitome of Europe and, thus, could not tolerate the idea of Greeks being a mixture of native Europeans, Africans and Semites. India was seen as interesting because of Sanskrit and its links to European languages. China, on the other hand, lost esteem in the eyes of Europeans because the balance of trade turned in Europe’s favour. Britain and France conducted large-scale attacks on China. This, in Bernal’s view, changed Europeans vision of China from one of a refined and enlightened civilisation to one of a society of corruption, torture, drugs and dirt. Ancient Egypt suffered the same fate.

As Loomba (1998: 115, cited in Pallua 2006: 78-79) states, in *Systema Naturae* (1735) Linnaeus established the principles of taxonomy in the biological sciences and, along with other species, categorised *Homo sapiens*:

1. Wild man: four-footed, mute, hairy
2. American: copper-coloured, choleric, erect. Paints self.  
Regulated by custom.
3. European: fair, sanguine, brawny. Covered with close vestments.

- Governed by laws.
4. Asiatic: sooty, melancholy, rigid. Covered with loose garments.  
Governed by opinions.
  5. African: black, phlegmatic, relaxed. Anoints himself with grease.  
Governed by caprice.

Supporters of *monogenism* (e.g. Locke, Blumenbach) believed the following:

[A]ll human beings were created equal and endowed with the natural rights of life, liberty and property and that Africans and some other non-European peoples had lost their equality with Europeans due to adverse climatic and environmental factors and degeneration [...] they had not only lost their white colour but also beauty, intelligence and civilisation.

Itandala, 2001: 76, cited in Pallua 2006: 79.

Blumenbach distinguished three primary races in 1779: the *Caucasian*, *Mongolian* and *Ethiopian*. He added two more to this later on, *American* and *Malay* (Curtin, 1999: 34, cited in Pallua 2006: 79). The *Ethiopian* and the *Mongolian* represent the two extremes of degeneration, the *Malays* intermediates between *Caucasians* and *Ethiopians*, and *Americans* between *Caucasians* and *Mongolians*. (Blumenbach 1865, cited in Kidd 2006: 9.) The multi-origin theory or *polygenism* was supported by Voltaire and Hume, for example, which meant that instead of the *Caucasian* race being the original and the rest of the races degenerations of it, the different races, in fact, had separate origins.

Pallua (2006: 91) continues that Victorian response to Darwin's theory of evolution was very religious: it was a shock that the creation of man could be explained without any supernatural elements. According to Lander (2010), Darwin abandoned traditional Christianity and was a passionate advocate for the abolishment of slavery. He did not believe in human races nor in the inferiority of certain of them. According to Baxter (2007: 1), Darwin set out to research a specific intellectual problem; his intention was not to produce a worldview when he wrote *Origin of Species* (1859). However, his studies created a neo-Darwinian school of thought also known as *Social Darwinism* where the biological concepts of natural selection and survival of the fittest are applied to sociology and politics.<sup>7</sup> Darwin's original research was tentative and speculative, but it has been taken as a part of scientific orthodoxy.

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<sup>7</sup> Recently, two researchers, Aivelo and Rantala (2014), had an interesting conversation via their blogs (tiede.fi) on evolution psychology which inadvertently discussed also the relationship between biological evolution and culture.

Moreau de Saint-Méry calculated the supposed blood fractions of different races (between 1776 and 1789). He himself was a Creole from Martinique. His main assumption was that a pure white was composed of 128 units of white blood and a pure black of 128 units of black blood. The mixed blood people were categorised according to the following list:

*négre/négresse*: 0 units of white blood, 128 of black  
*sacatra*: 16 units of white blood, 112 of black  
*griffe/griffonne*: 32 units of white blood, 96 of black  
*marabou*: 48 units of white blood, 80 of black  
*mulâtre*: 64 units of white blood, 64 of black (*mulatto*)  
*quarteron*: 96 units of white blood, 32 of black (*quadroon*)  
*métif*: 112 units of white blood, 16 of black (1/7; close to *octoroon*)  
*mamelouc*: 120 units of white blood, 8 of black (1/15; close to 1/16)  
*sang-mêlé*: 126 of white blood, 2 of black

Moreau de Saint-Méry 1776-1789 [1984], cited in Kidd 2006: 7-8.

This taxonomy has been influential and variations of it along with its terminology (including the use of blood) have been used in many later classifications. These are prevalent in the results, as well, as we will see later.

More modern researchers have divided the humankind in multiple ways. Garn (1961, cited in Kidd 2006: 10), for example, has made a categorisation of nine “geographical races” and thirty-two “local races”. However, none of the researchers have ever been able to agree about classifications of races. According to Kidd (2006: 10), the search for the ultimate classification is not something that science is yet to discover, but a “fool’s errand” which brings us to the next chapter.

### 3.5 Biological “race”

As Hall (1992 [1999]: 55) confirms, race is not a biological or a genetic category and it does not have a solid scientific foundation. **The genetics of different races vary but more so within different races than between them** (meaning races are pseudo-categories). Also Kidd (2006: 7) states that racial classifications involve “the arbitrary imposition of discontinuities on the continuous physical variation of the world’s peoples” and that “racial taxonomy is a scientific chimera”. Medically speaking, there are some slight differences between races, hence some clarity would be needed to the terms used in medical papers. In any case, there are some

differences arising from genetics, such as blacks being more prone to obesity and heart diseases, and red haired people need more anesthesia than everyone else.<sup>8</sup>

According to Goldberg (1993: 66), Darwinist concepts came to be expressed genetically. Common gene pools create biologically related persons. Hence, races are simply **populations** that possess certain inherited features. Also Reid (2012: 13) agrees with saying that biologically there is only one human race, and the *races* we refer to should be properly referred to as *populations*. There are many features that divide races differently from what we are used to and from one another which already proves that there are no clear populations either. Kidd (2006: 3-6) lists the following: fingerprints (which group together 1. Europeans, black Africans and East Asians; 2. Mongolians and Australian Aborigines; 3. Khoisans and some central Europeans), body hair (groups together Europeans, Australian Aborigines and the Ainu, and male baldness is common among Europeans and people from the Middle East, but rare among black Africans, Asians and native Amerindians), cerumen (most Asians have the dry type and Europeans and black Africans the wet one), lactase-positive and -negative groups (to do with digesting lactose; recently this have been questioned since it might be a case of over-processed milk instead of its lactose), blood groupings (study that explodes the notions of *white blood* and *black blood* of racist rhetoric), the sickle-cell gene that gives resistance against malaria (common in Arabia, southern India and tropical Africa), stature (Africa hosts the tallest and the shortest people on earth), epicanthic folds over the corners of the eye (found not just in the Far East, but also among the Khoisan), shovel-shaped incisors in the front teeth (common among the Asiatic populations and the Swedes).

Goldberg (1993: 67) concludes that race is not a fixed and static classificatory category and that “if they exist at all, races differ in relative ways, depending for their homogeneity and stability upon the relative constancy of the genes in question”. He (*op. cit.* 69) adds that the ones rejecting race’s biological connotation, identify race as “socially formed and materially determined class position”. Another possibility is to define race through culture “identifying race with language group, religion, group habits, norms, or customs: a typical style of behavior, dress, cuisine, music, literature, and art (*op. cit.* 70)”. My definition of *race* in this study is closest to the cultural one.

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<sup>8</sup> Green *et al.* (‘Neanderthal Genome’ in *Science* May 7th, 2010) state that all the other groups of people have four percent of Neanderthals’ genes except Africans. This would suggest that there are some slight differences after all. According to Diller and Cann (2011: 172) there are also some mutations of the brain that are common in Eurasia but not in Africa. However, no cognitive advantages have been found.

### 3.6 Race as a social construct

#### 3.6.1 Identity in Otherness

Hall (1922 [1999]: 55) calls race a *discursive construct* instead of biological or, indeed, cultural one: a group of people is separated socially on the basis of their symbolic markers such as physical features, ways of speech, and social practices (discourses). Blakemore and Boneham (1994: 5) also state that distinctions of race and ethnicity are socially constructed. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to decide in which racial categories certain peoples would be placed because whiteness and blackness go beyond skin colour (see section 4.2.2).

In 1984, according to Roediger (1994: 4), immigrants and descendants of immigrants of many nationalities in London would call themselves *Blacks*, because that “racial” category was the closest label they could find. Ambalavaner Sivanandan’s work (Roediger does not give more information) described this as a “political colour” of the oppressed. These nationalities included Asian Indian, Pakistanis, Malaysians, Turks, Chinese, Bangladeshis, Arabs, and also some Cypriots and Irish, who identified themselves as *Blacks*. Whilst Roediger was in South Africa in 1989, he noted that the opponents of apartheid used the term the *so-called coloureds* instead of the pure apartheid term. This, according to Roediger, shows how this category of mixed race is an ideological creation. Many of the people themselves preferred the term *African* (see also section 4.1.3). Roediger (1994: 5) continues that in South Africa (in 1989) some think that affirmative action should be extended to schools and that the way to nonracialism includes a consideration of race. Roediger points out that race is ideologically constructed as well as constructed from real, predictable, repeated patterns of life.

The question is whether we should talk about race or stop talking about it. Roediger’s (1994: 11-12) response is the former since according to him, the caution and the fear of open discussion of race blinds us to the tensions within white supremacy. He urges us to discuss race in general and to pay attention to the most neglected aspects of race in particular. I obviously agree with him since I am researching and discussing race.

Goldberg (1993: 41-42, 45, 47) argues that racism is a discourse and that the aforementioned discourse is a combination of all racialised expressions. These include beliefs, verbal outbursts, acts and their consequences, and the principles on which racialised institutions are based. These

expressions are informed by beliefs; they enunciate racist principles, supposed justifications of differences, advantages, claims to superiority, and legitimations of racist practices and institutions. Racist expression can take many styles and that mode can be interpreted in many ways; as aversive, academic or scientific, legalistic, bureaucratic, economic, cultural, linguistic, religious, mythical, or ideological. However, “race is a discursive object of racialized discourse that differs from racism. Race, nevertheless, creates the conceptual conditions of possibility [...] for racist expression to be formulated (*op. cit.* 42)”. In other words, it is not racist to use the term *race*, although, of course, it can be used for racist purposes. Race has, however, “served not only to rationalize already established social relations but to order them (*op. cit.* 45)”.

As Goldberg (1993: 44-45, 50, 64) explains, Europeans discovered “unconquered” land from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century on and, increasingly, science replaced religion as the grounds of truth claims and intellectual authority. The hegemony of racialised identity and identification increased through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries with the assistance of biological science, natural history, anthropology, and psychology. Polygenists claimed that Negroes and whites cannot produce fertile offspring, and thus they must be of different species. They also read race in terms of origins, but monogenists emphasized biological inheritance and hierarchy over pedigree.

According to Goldberg (1993: 51), we have inherited classification, order, and value as fundamentals of rationality. This led to racial hierarchies, although they are nowadays considered obsolete. However, I would argue that this hierarchy and the pursuit of it is still within Western culture no matter how obsolete it is officially. Also, classifications and categorisations would seem to be quite natural for human nature. Prejudices and stereotypes are the ones that are dangerous when they are combined with categorisations because then we create hierarchies through Othering. Goldberg (*ibid.*) points out that racial classification as a synchronic system does not implicate hierarchy but it does implicate difference. In other words, racial differentiation is not necessarily racist.

On the US scene, Goldberg (1993: 47) differentiates between colour racism and anti-Semitism claiming that they differ because blacks are referred to as animals whereas Jews “only in the context of some abstruse mythology (*ibid.*)”. Still, he continues that Jews are often described in terms of animal imagery. I fail to see a huge difference between these two forms of racism. Historically, obviously, black racism has always been more intense and more widely applied



(which is why also this study concentrates on the contradictions of white and black) but the discrimination itself is very similar.

Goldberg (1993: 69) states that as status, “race is simply an index of social standing or rank reflected in terms of criteria like wealth, education, style of life, linguistic capacity, residential location, consumptive capacity, or having or lacking respect”. This suggests that race can be seen as class. Goldberg also mentions that those who “act white”, are considered white. I would add that this is possible but can also be very difficult for blacks (but that the lighter the skin, the easier this is, see *e.g.* Chestnutt’s short story *The Wife of his Youth*, 1898).

Goldberg (1993: 59, 62) states that when people recognise themselves as Other, they develop an ‘identity-in-Otherness’. He also argues that from the inception of the term *race*, it has referred to the ones perceived and constituted as Other. (See also section 3.2.)

### 3.6.2 Race making

*So this cop, he gets out the car all with his cop shit. But see, he had sunglasses, so when he look at me first from the car, I look darker. When he get out, he like- uht, uht? He get confused. ‘Cause if you put me next to the cop, I’m whiter than the cop. He start askin’ me. “What are you? What are you?” [...] “Are you Puertorican, are you Puertorican?” I say, “Nah, I’m not Puertorican yo, I’m selling Bart Simpson OJ Simpson T-shirts, what’s the problem officer?” But see, he wanna know, what am I? I mean, my color is white like Bill Clinton, but that’s not good enough for him, you know, in the way that I’m speaking, or I don’t even know.*

Danny Hoch, a white comedian from the Bronx. 1997. *Bronx*. In *Jails, Hospitals and Hip-Hop*.

Goldberg (1993: 70-71) states that in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries language was used as a marker of class and high culture. Some European linguists classified people into races by language groups. The ancient Indo-European superiority of “Aryan sagacity” was seen to descent linguistically via the classical grammar of the Greeks and Romans. The Chinese and Semitic were seen as inferior civilisations and were supposedly linguistically incapable and unable to assimilate. Smith (1984: 3, cited in Goldberg 1993: 71) explains how the *wandering Jew* was thought to be incapable of speaking German properly because Jews were seen as depraved people; a part of the common class that was seen as the nomadic racial Other (like the Romani people and American Indian nations). In contrast, refined language allegedly made the speakers rational, moral, civilised, and capable of abstract thinking. Goldberg (*op. cit.* 71) continues that the **cultural definition of race** has gained ground ever since the Second World War and it

seems to eclipse all others. This can also be used as a means of making terms fuzzy and covering racism.

Goldberg (1993: 75, 78) brings forth both ethnicity which can be used synonymously with race (which he calls *ethnorace*), and nationality. Balibar's (1990, cited in Goldberg 1993: 80) term *supernationalism* refers to nationality that is specified with race. Goldberg (*op. cit.* 44-45) states that class can play a part in the explanation of race, but not nearly the whole. He also adds that the analytic relations between race and class are complex.

Goldberg (1993: 83) states that race can be created. Reid (2012: 220) has some examples of this "tribe making". Before colonialism, ethnic groupings in Africa were not so rigid. For example, the Fulani were originally a cluster of widely scattered, loosely connected groups in the West African savannah in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term *Fulani* covered many small ethnicities which had never considered themselves connected. Also, the Zulu were originally a tiny sub-group but they incorporated a host of other groups in order to build a state. White dominance in South Africa made the Zulu even prouder of their own Zulu-ness. The Yoruba of Nigeria are connected with their language: when missionaries came and translated the Bible into Yoruba, the different ethnicities speaking the same language came together. These and many other ethnic groups were formalised into "tribes" with the establishment of colonial rule.

Bernal (1987: 30, 241) states that after the rise of black slavery and racism, black Africa was to be kept as far away as possible. He uses Egyptians as an example: After *Renaissance* Egyptians were perceived as white, but in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century their whiteness was questioned and them being civilised was denied. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were completely stripped from their philosophic reputation and they were seen as more African; lazy, pleasure-loving, childish, and materialistic. All in all, Ancient Egypt was inconveniently placed on the African continent, since blacks were proven scientifically to be incapable of civilisation. There were only three possible explanations for this: Ancient Egyptians were not black, Ancient Egyptians had not created a true civilisation, or both of the above. According to Bernal, most 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century historians have taken the third route.

As Goldberg (1993: 74) states, whenever we identify a person according to their skin colour, the colour is not the only feature we see. There are numerous shades of black and white. I would

add that we also see at least their cultural, national, class and gender features, not just their shade. For example, we can identify between a Somali and an American and we can see a difference between an American gang member and an American professor even when they share the same colour shades.

### 3.7 Discussion on race

Race is a concept that provokes a lot of complicated and heated discussions. It is very slippery because of its indefinite definitions and historical usages. It is also ingrained in everybody's minds as a concept although it is perceived rather politically incorrect to use it as a means of categorisation. All in all, race is an apt breeding ground for PC language since the concept itself is a dodgy subject with possible racist connotations and practices. The most important lesson is that races are socially made intentional creations although they may seem to be biological categories. However, since race is conceptualised, it is also dangerous to ignore it. Othering comes so easily to us all that we have to be aware of it in order to try and avoid it.

#### 4. Background information on the two areas

*The history of shame is also a history of civilizations.*

Silvan S. Tomkins 1962/1963 (quoted in Bartkowski 1995: vii).

This chapter offers brief histories (concentrating on the racial aspects) of both South Africa and the United States along with some further information on relevant subjects such as cultural and sociological backgrounds for both apartheid and the Jim Crow legislation. There is also some information on affirmative action on both continents, but background information on the Censuses is given along with the results since some of the information is closely linked with the results. This chapter aims to provide a foundation for the quest for locating the PC racial terms in certain legal and law-governed texts in the 1950's and the 2000's.

The data consists of both laws and Census information because the language register used in those language domains is highly official and therefore arguably as politically correct as possible. I will not go into details concerning legislation, but the main points are good to keep in mind: laws are the gravest form of keeping civil order and they are highly binding. The highest form of legislation is the constitution and in the United States state legislation is the most common form of legislation since very few items are governed by federal legislation. Court cases will not be included into the study although in the United States court cases create precedents for how the laws should be interpreted. Apartheid legislation was national and Jim Crow legislation was state level legislation. The constitutions are briefly touched upon.

Censuses are governed by laws which make them highly official, but they also have to be practical since the questionnaires are answered by everybody. I will be using the most recent censuses of both countries: the South Africa Census of 2011 and the United States Census of 2010.

#### 4.1 South Africa

##### 4.1.1 A history of South Africa

*[...] on condition that [...] the policy concerned is inspired by Christian love and not by racial selfishness or a feeling of racial superiority.*

B.J. Marais (1952: 24, 298, cited in Dubow 1995: 266) on apartheid.

During the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, apologists for the slave trade and humanitarian abolitionists in Africa developed the idea of Africa as a land of savagery and bloodthirstiness. It was a primitive continent that progress and civilisation had forgotten and it was crying out

for redemption. This, according to Reid (2012: 113), is the beginning of the modern European perceptions of Africa.

As Reid (2012: 65, 67, 69) explains, whites (mainly British and Dutch people) came to the Cape of Good Hope as settlers, not just as traders. There were conflicts between both the new settlers and the locals, and between the two settler peoples. The 18<sup>th</sup> century Ngoni revolution has probably been exaggerated in order to justify colonialism and, later, the apartheid state: the whites portrayed them as a threat so that they would be able to justify white dominance later on. The Zulu state grew and grew during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and became the dominant power in the region until the British defeated and destroyed it in 1879 (Anglo-Zulu War).

Reid (2012: 72) continues with a former version of southern African history: Bantu-speaking, iron-working farmers crossed into the current South Africa only during the 17<sup>th</sup> century which would then coincide with the arrival of the first Dutch settlers. Thus, Europeans supposedly encountered an “empty land” which gave the white minority a justification to claim authority over a vast area. This, of course, was not really the case. There were numerous African peoples in the region by the time Europeans arrived.

According to Reid (2012: 72-75), the Boers (later on Afrikaners) developed a distinctive identity with their own language and culture, and Calvinist beliefs. Initially, the interracial relations were flexible and common, but, in time, attitudes hardened, and in particular in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There was a strong sense of hierarchy and relative privilege based on color. Already then, in the Dutch Cape Colony, slaves of mixed parentage were generally skilled labour whilst the worst positions were filled by Africans, or by those who were imported from Indonesia. The British seized Cape Colony in 1795. The tensions between the two white communities escalated. In the 1830's, several thousand Boer families moved north and this was to be called the Great Trek. This later gained mythological proportions; it became a kind of exodus. According to Reid (2012:74), though, the *voortrekkers* were, in fact, unconnected groups with little cohesion, and the only common features were their mutual antipathy to the British and their desire for land. They occupied the interior areas of Southern Africa that were not occupied by any African peoples. This caused some tension between the Boers and the Zulu (among other peoples). They fought in 1838 and the Zulu lost. After that, both of the groups demonstrated a grudging respect for one another. The Brits wanted to keep an eye on the Boers but this became too expensive and thus Britain recognised the Boer republics of Transvaal and

Orange Free State. The Boers fought the Sotho and took some of their land. Africans usually became tenant farmers on white farms.



*Image 2. South Africa in 1877. Visible are Orange Free State (Oranje-Freistaat) and Transvaal (Südafrikanische Republik) along with Natal (next to Basutoland, on the coast) and Cape Colony (Capland). (Bonnier 1827: 149-150.)*

Reid (2012: 75-76, 142, 148) continues that by the 1860's some degree of political and economic balance was found. There was no systematic imperialism in Africa before the 1870's. Unfortunately, in the 1870's, the diamonds of Orange River were found, and in the 1880's, the gold of Transvaal. The Brits attacked the Boers and by the end of the Second Boer War (1902), all the Boer became British. John Atkinson Hobson, an economist and critic of imperialism, accused the British policies of lack of moral direction because of their violence towards both the Boers and the African chiefs. The British civilising mission was undermined. The contemporary Lord Chamberlain, Earl of Clarendon (Villiers), on the other hand, believed that progress, order and civilisation could only be brought by force.

Reid (2012: 271) states that a Union was established in 1910 and the legislation represented a historic compromise between two competing white communities. In reality, the white minority needed to defend its privileged position. Between the World Wars, a succession of white governments had developed legislation aimed at racial segregation. Anglican missionaries and white political parties embraced the idea. For some, especially more extreme Afrikaners, it was a crucial means to control and exploit African labour force. For them, it was also underpinning intrinsic white supremacy. For others, segregation was the key to the process of “black development”, and a way to “protect” the indigenous peoples from the dangers of racial intermixing and exposure to “modernity”.

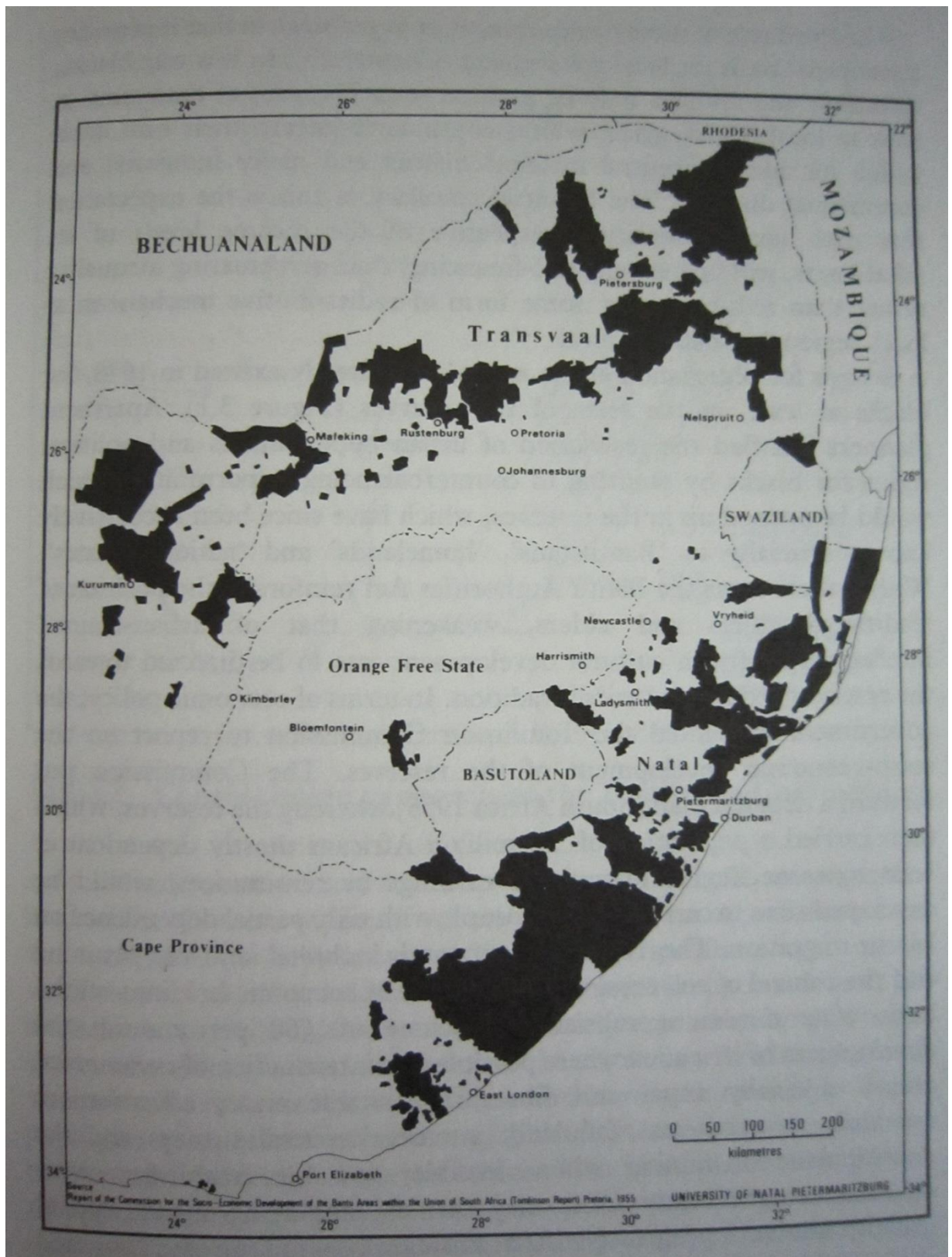
Reid (2012: 227, 271-272) continues that thousands of the rapidly expanding African population migrated to cities in search of work after the Second World War. This prompted white fear and in the general election of 1948 the National Party won. Their campaign revolved around the term *apartheid*, meaning separateness. The previous segregationist policy was taken to the next level. They remained in power until 1994. (It should be noted that the white working class was genuinely suffering in the 1930’ and 1940’s and there were a number of poor whites. This may be another reason for the win of the National Party. It is also worth noting that there are still poor whites in Southern Africa.) The African National Congress (ANC) was first very mild and had narrow interests so they did not fight back. The segregation was designed to reinforce “tribal” identities, so that the African population would remain divided. The apartheid aimed to restrict Africans to the already-crowded reserves, unless they were in white employment. From the 1960’s onwards, the reserves came autonomous “Homelands”, or Bantustans which were characterised by corruption, violence, and misgovernment.

Steinberg (2000: 64) points out that in South Africa there were two types of apartheid: petty and grand. He contrasts petty apartheid with the Jim Crow law of sitting in the back of a bus. Grand apartheid refers to “the political disfranchisement and banishment of millions of blacks to isolated and impoverished ‘homelands’” (*ibid.*). He concludes that the grander type of segregation and oppression in the United States is a racial division of labour.

Reid (2012: 272-273) states that in the 1950’s ANC gained young, gifted leaders, such as Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, and Walter Sisulu. African Nationalist leaders recognised the need for vigorous resistance. Public demonstrations erupted. The various “non-white” groups joined together and wanted a democratic, non-racial South Africa (although the alliance



between Africans and Asians was fragile). There were some tensions within the ANC leadership because there were both white liberals and Communistic whites in the ANC, too.



*Image 3.* South Africa in 1955, Bantu areas (reserves) in black (Lemon 1987: 55).



Reid (2012: 292-293) continues that the apartheid regime was hardening, repression heightening, and African political activists pushed for violence more and more in the 1950's. In Sharpeville, in 1960 police opened fire on unarmed demonstrators. Most were shot in the back. South Africa was internationally condemned. South Africa banned ANC and PAC (Pan-Africanist Congress) and forced the struggle underground. South Africa withdrew from the British Commonwealth in 1961 and declared itself a republic. ANC gained a militant wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation). In 1963, many of ANC's leaders were captured, including Mandela. In the 1970's, especially worker protests were numerous and resistance spread. The *Black Consciousness Movement* emerged trying to rediscover African self-respect. ANC gained bases in Mozambique, Zambia and ZANU-held (Zimbabwe African National Union) areas of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) for guerrillas. South African regime intensified their attacks on ANC and heightened repression. In 1976, the police fired on a peaceful march of schoolchildren in Soweto. This caused the Soweto riots. The violent revolt across the country was tantamount to a civil war in some areas. The conflagration continued into the 1980's with some perpetual places of unrest. ANC and *Black Consciousness* were in conflict and gangs were seeking to take advantage of the political and social chaos.

Reid (2012: 293-294, 324) concludes that this chaos forced the government to consider some limited reform. A new Constitution of 1984 gave superficial parliamentary representation to Indians and coloureds. Popular boycotts of white businesses and government schools led to the establishment of "townships", African residential areas administered by African-run councils. These were discredited because of frequently corrupt local leaders, though, and chaos ensued. In 1985, President Botha declared a state of emergency and mass arrests and state-sanctioned killings reached shocking new levels. International condemnation came now also from Britain and the US, who had remained quiet before. (They remained quiet for economic and ideological reasons: South Africa received much of their military hardware from the West and was anti-communist because of ANC's leftist leanings. This made the West reluctant to act before.) In 1989, President de Klerk, who was known as a hardliner, turned out to be pragmatic: he cancelled the Population Registration and Group Areas acts, took away the bans on ANC and PAC, and released Mandela in 1990. Apartheid was practically over. The country was in turmoil with different political and security forces *etc.* being violent towards one another. Mandela was very magnanimous towards the dying regime and managed to unite most of South Africans so much that he won the first non-racial elections of 1994 with ANC. Mandela's vision of the *rainbow nation* and ANC's pragmatic and competent administration brought stability. The

Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to heal some of the wounds that apartheid caused. Vast inequity in economic and social opportunity persists to this day.

The recent history of Namibia (it was also briefly colonised by Germany) is intertwined with the history of South Africa because Namibia became independent from South Africa only in 1990 (Reid 2012: 286). SWAPO (the South West African People's Organization) fought against South African occupation for a quarter of a century before Namibia's independence and the victory through the collapse of apartheid (Reid 2012: 333).

Affirmative action in South Africa started with the Equal Employment Act of 1998 (EE; *app.* 4) which aims to address the "disparities in employment, occupation and income within the national labour market (initial words)" by not just repealing discriminatory laws, but by what could be called positive discrimination. This act was followed by Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 (BEE; *app.* 5) which was needed to "establish a legislative framework for the promotion of black economic empowerment (initial words)". BEE encompasses all nonwhite (*black*, as they are called collectively in the act) races, women, and people with disabilities. These laws are still active. In the US, as we will see later, women were added into the Equal Employment Occupation Commission (EEOC) law at some point, but the future of the law is fragile since it is attacked constantly on state level (see section 4.2.6).

#### 4.1.2 Apartheid

*Our own position in South Africa presents [...] more than sufficient justification for a policy of separate development [...] on condition that [...] the policy concerned is inspired by Christian love and not by racial selfishness or a feeling of racial superiority.*

B.J. Marais 1952: 298, cited in Dubow 1995: 266.

Dubow (1995: 246-249) explains that Afrikaner identity emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century after the traumatic experience of the Boer Wars. During the late 1950's and 1960's, Afrikaner nationalism gained mythical proportions. Afrikaners were seen as hardy creatures of the frontier and stubborn fundamentalists of the Calvinist tradition. They were called the *white tribe of Africa*. They held their outdated racial views to maintain white supremacy in all its forms. However, cultural essentialism was preferred over the scientific racism drawn from Social Darwinism. Finally, apartheid started to fragment after the 1976 uprisings and by the mid-1980's Afrikaner nationalism was in retreat.

Dubow (1995: 248-250, 253, 255) states that Afrikaner nationalism was markedly slow to address directly the relations between black and white people, but there were preparations for apartheid during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The idea for apartheid came from a specifically Christian-nationalist perspective and, especially, from a neo-Calvinist framework. J.G. Strydom, a Free State missionary, coined the term in 1938 and he insisted that differentiation would not imply repression (Kinghorn 1986: 90, cited in Dubow 1995: 253). Tradition and history were used to justify the separation rather than theology. Dubow continues that in the mid-1930's the Christian-national organisation, the Afrikaner Broederbond, were severely opposed any form of *samesmelting* ('amalgamation') of the English and the Afrikaners. In other words, they opposed intermarriages even between the two white peoples.

According to Inspan (1944: 21, cited in Dubow 1995: 256-257), in the 1944 meeting many principles of racial policy were adopted. The whites were supposed to be guardians over non-white races; this was their Christian duty. The idea was that eventually the other races would reach a certain level from which point on they could decide for themselves. This meant that no further blood mixture should take place in the interests of all the races; that the control over all the aspects of government should be in white hands; that nothing should cut off a person from their own group, tribe, or volk; and that a feeling of worth and pride in one's own group, tribe, or volk should, in a Christian manner, be sought. Specific policies in regard to Africans, coloureds, and Indians were recommended. The congress concluded that its policy was based on the Holy Scripture (God willed pluriformity rather than uniformity) and on the whites' experience. In short, the core of apartheid ideology, *i.e.* racial separation, rested on three claims: scriptural injunction, the historical experience of Afrikanerdom, and the findings of science.

Dubow (1995: 258-267) states that the Great Trek, according to the Afrikaners, exemplified God's will and that they were God's *Chosen People* (this sort of rhetoric is not unfamiliar elsewhere either). They also believed that every nation had a divine historical destiny. B.J. Marais (1952: 295, 298, cited in Dubow 1995: 266) saw racial crossing as "extremely undesirable and dangerous", but justified the segregation through Christian brotherhood and love. All in all, the Afrikaners were often portrayed as an encapsulated 17<sup>th</sup> century Calvinist community.

Gerrie Eloff, a geneticist, (1933, cited in Dubow 1995: 271-272) encouraged marriages between appropriate couples practicing "positive eugenics". The aim was to improve the whole Boer

race by weeding out “inferior” characteristics. At the time of the British occupation, the Boers were 53 percent Dutch, 28 percent German, and 15 percent French. This made them, according to Eloff, taller, heavier, and darker in complexion than the pure Nordic races. Hence, they were better equipped to survive the African sun. They were also supposedly very fertile. Eloff stated that since races are not static, white races could intermarry, but race hygiene was to be maintained. The distaste against miscegenation (*i.e.* interracial marriage) was based on incompatibility of racial temperament and social inheritance.

All in all, as Dubow (1993: 281-283) concludes, three main elements were incorporated in the construction of apartheid: *Dutch neo-Calvinism*, *German Romanticism*, and Anglo-Saxon racial ideology. *Continental Romanticism* openly distrusted rational thought. The Boers’ experience, instinct, and tradition were used as validating principles. However, full-blown racist explanation was seldom used. All of this resulted in a subtle mixture of cultural relativism (intentionally misunderstood) and racial determinism. Apartheid left terms such as *groups*, *nation*, and *cultural identity* with a ghostly resonance.

According to Reid (2012: 272), apartheid depended on the racial classification that put people into distinct categories. The Population Register Act of 1950 divided people into white and non-white broadly. The non-whites were further divided into *coloureds*, *Indians*, and *Bantu* or *African*. (The term *Bantu* was transported from linguistics and misused.) The *Bantu* classification led to another subdivision: into “tribal” groupings, such as *Zulu*, *Xhosa*, *Sotho*, *etc.* The Group Area Act of 1950 specified where these tribes could live. The subsequent laws restricted mobility and social activities, segregated public places, public transport, and education. They also outlawed sexual relations between the different races. Apartheid’s purpose was to maintain the race division: Africans as subordinate, largely unskilled working class. Black trade unions were prohibited. Bantu Education Act of 1953 put blacks into designated government-run schools where racial distinctions were emphasised, and which provided education only in basic skills. As Reid states: “[The apartheid system] facilitated social control and constituted an exercise in social engineering.” This, he concludes, is one of the most detested pillars of apartheid.

#### 4.1.3 A special case: coloureds of South Africa

*Kaffirs from down country [South Africa] – Cape half breeds, Fingoes, Zulu and a few Basutu, a choice collection of rascality.*

S.P. Hyatt 1963: 31, cited in Mandaza 1997: 2.

This section is mainly in accordance to Mandaza's book *Race, Colour and Class in Southern Africa*. Mandaza (1997: 15, 18) discusses mixed race people mostly in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi but these are all old South African land and thus have been influenced by South African policies. Southern Africa had (and still has to some extent) a racist ideological view of a three-tiered race-caste-class hierarchy of whites, coloureds and blacks. Coloureds were sent off to white Christian schools from the 1940's onwards and, thus, were not living among the natives (*i.e.* blacks). Laws from around 1900 make no distinction between the coloureds and the natives. In Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe), a need for coloured schools arose in 1907 when the Church of Christ Day School which was run by a New Zealand missionary, F.L. Hadfield received a grant for having such a school.

An interesting difference between the United States and Southern Africa is that of legislation against miscegenation since it was not made illegal in South Africa until during the 1950's, but was a crucial piece of legislation early on in the US. Miscegenation was seen as a threat to the social structure of the white society; to the superiority and supremacy of the whites, and to the model of virtue, morality, justice and Christian example which the white race was supposed to uphold. However, no legislation (at least in the three territories) was made against miscegenation. The white leaders apparently saw it as a temporary phenomenon with no effect on the white society. Black men were successfully shunned from raping white women by the 1920's but white men continued to cohabit with black women and, thus, the number of half caste children increased. Their racial status presented a problem: many of them had a prominent white father. These Eurafricans/coloureds identified with the whites. They were "a **visible**, physical threat to white supremacy which rested upon the more **invisible** monopoly of economic, political and social power" (*op.cit.* 159). Finally, a new status for half castes was invented: an intermediate between the whites at the top and the blacks at the bottom of the race-caste-class hierarchy. It would be seen whether the half castes were content with being in between or whether they would want to assimilate into the white society. (Mandaza 1997: 157-159.)

*Trusteeship* is explained by Gray (1960: 5, cited in Mandaza 1997: 185) as a trust that was supposed to help peoples under strenuous conditions of the modern world. It was paternalistic and veiled a justification of racialism in it. Mandaza (1997: 185) continues that both trusteeship and segregation have the same basis and the same aims: to safeguard the white monopoly of economic, social, and political power. The way to do that was to stave off the emergence of black middle-class while ensuring a permanent supply of cheap black labour.

At the turn of the 1920's and 1930's, half caste associations emerged along with the rise of a black working class. The half castes emphasised that they were indeed children of white men and, thus, demanded that all half castes be accorded a non-native status. They even wanted to be assimilated completely to the white society. The colonialists at the time argued that one was either a native or a European; uncivilised or civilised; white or black. The half caste leaders took advantage of this. In other words, the hypodescent system was in use also in Africa initially (see section 4.2.3). However, the half castes were children of prominent colonial administrators and, as such, members of the colonial bourgeoisie. Many of the half castes were to inherit their fathers, receive an expensive education, and enjoy preferential treatment. The fathers themselves played an important part in the formation of a platform for institution of a coloured status. Finally, in 1929, a High Court judge of Nyasaland (Malawi), Haythorne Reed, ruled that half castes were 'non-native'. However, the ruling did include a cultural side, as well: if a person with the blood of any aboriginal tribe or race was living after the manner of any such tribe or race, he/she was a native. This shows how the root of the differentiation between 'European' and 'native' was not **race** but **class**. Indeed, some half castes were accorded coloured or "half way house" (Lord Passfield) status solely on the basis of class. Race and colour were seen more as a means to achieve a certain class. (Mandaza 1997: 187-190, 787.)

Half castes had to be removed from the native surroundings in order for them to be as white as possible. They needed proper education and other social amenities along with a maintained life style according to their status. The concept of half caste was predominantly put into practice by the Christian missionaries as their educators. The missionaries were a part of the white settler ideology of white supremacy. (Also blacks were often educated by missionaries.) The school was not as big a transition if the child in question was young, but the reality was different for those who came to the schools as older children and, thus, remembered their former life in black surroundings. In practice, coloured life commenced in a coloured school, or, if that was impossible, as an adult in an urban area with the use of colour as a means to obtain better

employment than the blacks, and living with other coloureds in coloured areas or ghettos. However, since in the 1930's and 1940's these coloured facilities were unreachable to most coloureds, only a small portion of coloureds required a coloured status. (Mandaza 1997: 188, 194, 209, 228.)

Surname was an asset to a coloured. Coloureds would also have a photograph of their fathers in all their colonial glory: a gun, a helmet, a hunting trophy, and surrounded with black servants. This photo would be hanging in the living-room as a reminder and proof of white heritage. However, coloureds themselves often had a rather negative colour self-identification. In schools, the lighter the skin and the straighter the hair, the better and they were emphasised and flaunted. Native features were considered inferior. The educators noticed an inferiority complex among the coloureds in coloured schools and also in coloured communities in general. The coloureds were, in fact, neither white nor black, but in between. They were taken away from native surroundings but were not accepted into the white society. (This is reminiscent of the stolen generations in Australia.) (Mandaza 1997: 229-232.)

The coloured schools became homes to the coloureds, and the educators became much like their parents. Coloured boy-girl relations were encouraged and there were many marriages celebrated at the schools. For the nuns, the coloureds were like their own children and, also, souls they had saved. The coloured institutions were abolished during *African Nationalism*, but the legacy lived on. (Mandaza 1997: 235, 788.)

From the 1950's onwards *African Nationalism* emerged and, along with that, coloureds' demands for equality with whites. It was deeply ingrained in the coloureds that they were better qualified to enjoy a higher status than the Africans. They refused to be identified with Africans. However, as the African petit bourgeoisie expanded and *African Nationalism* became more prominent, it was increasingly difficult for the coloureds to defend their artificial privileges to the blacks. They also endured discrimination by the whites, although less than the blacks. Indeed, the coloureds probably represented the most colonised section of the colonised peoples. They adopted the whites' ideology and hoped to become the social, political and economic equals of their masters. Indeed, during the *African Nationalism*, some of the coloureds gained more privileges because their pleas were heard by the whites. (Mandaza 1997: 464-466, 519, 560.)

In the end, though, most coloured people found the *African Nationalism* more attractive than the white settler ideology, and, thus, the coloureds got closer to the blacks. During the era of the liberation struggle, the coloureds mostly belonged to the wage-earning class which was also the class where many whites, but also a bulk of urban blacks belonged to. (Mandaza 1997: 574, 715.)

The coloured identity lacked the kind of territoriality and cultural source that most ethnic identifications stem from. The coloured is more opaquely artificial than ethnicities usually, although most Others are social constructions. The coloureds have also always been a small minority in relation to the vast black population. Thus, it has been difficult for them to be a significant political factor. For blacks, the term coloured is associated with colonialism. In the 1980 and 1985 General Elections of Zimbabwe, coloureds were classified as whites. Now, in Zimbabwe (and Malawi and Zambia), the previously called coloureds occupy the most depressed rungs of the working class and the unemployed. This is partly because the coloureds were cut off from the rural peasantry and, as such, cannot work in agriculture like many African working class people can. (Mandaza 1997: 788-789, 791, 795.) According to my own experiences, the coloureds have maintained their place in between blacks and whites societally. For example, in the capital Windhoek, there are two major poor areas, Katutura and Khomasdal. Katutura is mainly black and the poorest and largest area in Windhoek whilst Khomasdal is predominantly coloured and is considered the second poorest area in Windhoek.

According to Mandaza (1997: 795-796), the global race question is still unanswered and that Africans still find themselves at the bottom of the rank. He states that the coincidence between race/colour and class is still quite rampant in this world. He calls race and colour ideologies as representations of false consciousness and urges people, and especially researchers, to transform the social reality that still confronts us.

Coloureds were called *half castes* until the 1930's. The term *coloured* appears in apartheid legislation. *Half caste* was used in colonial Africa to describe the offspring of black and white parentage. *Half caste*, therefore, indicates not only the physical characteristics of the persons as half white and half black, but also an intermediate position within a three-race-caste-class hierarchy. The term *half caste* was deemed derogatory in the official colonial circles but finding a term with no racist connotations proved to be impossible. (Mandaza 1997: 147, 149, 183-184.)



In the legislation (see *app. 3*) the term *native* was defined virtually by the differentiation between “European” or coloniser and the African (native) or colonised. The race-caste-class strata of whites and blacks was (and is) a political, economic, and social aim to legally differentiate people. A *native* was ‘not European’ (*i.e.* Other). It is also interesting that half castes were not included in the definition of *native*. Mandaza states that this is because the ideology of white supremacy did not include the existence of half castes. (Mandaza 1997: 186.) Also Lemon (1987: 255) states that the coloureds are the ones left over which can be seen in the Group Areas Act of 1950: “Any person who is not a member of the white group or the native group.” He adds that many coloured intellectuals preferred to call themselves *so-called coloureds* and the *Black Consciousness Movement* counts them as blacks.

As Dubow (1995: 272) states, in Namibia, there is also a race/class of people that are called the *Basters*. They are descendants of whites and Namas who were called *Hottentots* by Europeans before. They were considered one of the lowest races in the world along with Australian aboriginals. Their home is Reheboth (*ca.* 90 kilometres south from Windhoek) and it is still known for being a town of the Basters. They are counted as coloureds officially.

## 4.2 The United States

### 4.2.1 A history of the United States

*I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.*

Martin Luther King, Jr.



Image 4. A current map of the United States. (University of Alabama.)

The following chapters are cited from Brunner (2007) unless stated otherwise.

The first African slaves arrived in Jamestown, Virginia in 1619. In 1787, slavery was made illegal in the Northwest Territory, but the US Constitution stated that Congress may not ban the slave trade until 1808. In 1789, the Constitution stated that blacks in America are classified as only two-fifths of a human. Also, the Supreme Court decided that slaves are property, not citizens.

A federal slave fugitive law was enacted in 1793 which meant that the slaves, who had managed to escape and cross state lines into a free state, could be returned back. The same year Eli Whitney invented cotton gin which increased the demand for slave labour enormously, although, in 1808, the Congress banned the importation of slaves from Africa. In 1820, the Missouri Compromise banned slavery north of the southern border of Missouri. This is when the slave fugitive law came even more prominent and it was restricted in 1850, after the

Mexican War, when California was admitted as a free state and Utah and New Mexico territories were left to be decided by popular sovereignty (the Compromise of 1850). The slave trade in Washington, D.C. was also prohibited. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published in 1852 which became one of the most influential works when it comes to anti-slavery sentiments. Two years later, the Missouri Compromise was repealed and tensions arose. Kansas and Nebraska were established as territories.

The Confederacy was founded in 1861 when the Deep South seceded and the Civil War broke out. During the war, in 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation where it is said that "all persons held as slaves" within the Confederate states "are, and henceforward shall be free." This and the added Thirteenth Amendment of the Constitution officially abolished slavery. Two years later the war ended. Lincoln was assassinated five days after the war and the Ku Klux Klan was formed in Tennessee by ex-Confederates.

Reconstruction was a set of codes that were designed to protect blacks' civil rights after the abolition. It was set in 1867 and acquitted in the South in 1877. That is when Jim Crow was established. Steinberg (2000: 71) paints a gloomy picture: he suggests that something similar might happen if affirmative action were banned.

Right after the war, the Southern states passed Black Codes which drastically restricted the rights of the newly freed slaves. However, the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Amendments were ratified in 1867 and 1868, respectively, nullifying the Dred Scott case which had ruled that blacks are not citizens, and the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified in 1870, which gave blacks the right to vote. Tens of thousands of blacks migrated to Kansas from the southern states. This is referred to as the Black Exodus. Black schools, also colleges, were founded. In 1882, the colony of Monrovia (current Liberia) was established and about 12 000 former slaves were voluntarily relocated there over the next forty years.

In 1898, the Supreme Court decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson* stated that racial segregation is constitutional. This paved the way for the repressive Jim Crow laws in the South. Booker T. Washington's policy of accommodation to white society received an opponent from the *Niagara Movement* which was founded by W.E.B. DuBois in 1905. The *Niagara Movement* embraced a more radical approach, and it called for immediate equality. The *NAACP* (the *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People*) was founded four years later by

intellectuals and it was led by W.E.B. DuBois. The *NAACP* was dedicated to political equality and social justice and it became the most influential black civil rights organisation for the next half century. In 1914, the *Universal Negro Improvement Association* was established by Marcus Garvey and it promoted the spirit of race pride. In the 1920's and 1930's, the *Harlem Renaissance* flourished, which fostered a new black cultural identity through art and intellect. In 1947, Jackie Robinson became the first black baseball player in Major league and a year later President Truman integrated the US army for the first time, although blacks had been fighting in every major US war. In 1954, racial segregation in schools was deemed unconstitutional.

Malcolm X led the *Black Muslims* along with Elijah Muhammad. The association was a black nationalist and separatist movement. According to the movement, only blacks can resolve the problems of blacks.

After a number of events, such as Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger, the *Civil Rights Movement* spurred in 1955. Blacks launched a successful year-long bus boycott and Montgomery's buses were desegregated in 1956. A year later, *The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)* was established by Martin Luther King, Jr., along with others. Some black students were blocked from entering their high school in the South and federal troops were needed. There were sit-ins in segregated places and other nonviolent protests throughout the South in 1960. Groups of *freedom riders* took bus trips through the South to test out new laws and were attacked by angry mobs. The first black student enrolled at the University of Mississippi and riots broke out in 1962.

In 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr., advocated nonviolent civil disobedience. He was arrested during anti-segregation protest in Alabama. His famous "I Have a Dream" speech was delivered on the Capitol Hill during the March on Washington that was attended by about 250 000 people. Riots and killings continued in the South. President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964. It prohibited discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin and it still stands. In the same year, Martin Luther King Jr. received his Nobel Peace Prize. A year later, Malcolm X was assassinated. On *Bloody Sunday*, peaceful demonstrators led by Martin Luther King, Jr., were violently attacked by state troopers in Alabama. Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 which made it easier to register to vote. There was another violent riot in Los Angeles. In 1966, the Black Panthers were founded and the phrase *black power* was coined by Michael Carmichael. Major race riots broke out in Newark and Detroit. The Supreme

Court ruled that prohibiting interracial marriage was unconstitutional. In 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated and President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 which prohibited discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing. The Tuskegee syphilis experiment ended in 1972 where black men were studied to see how long it takes for syphilis to kill someone. In 1992, the first race riot in decades broke out in south-central Los Angeles after a court case where four white police officers were acquitted although there was a videotape of them beating a black man.

In 1978, a Supreme Court case ruling upheld the constitutionality of affirmative action, but imposed some limitations on it. In 2003, the Supreme Court ruled in line with affirmative action that race can be one of many factors considered by colleges when selecting their students, but in 2006 it was ruled unconstitutional to try and maintain diversity in schools by considering the race of the assigned students.

In 2008, the first African American was nominated as a major party nominee for president, and on November 4, Barack Obama became the first black president of the United States. He was re-elected in 2012.

#### 4.2.2 Whiteness

*"I don't see race. I'm a good person."*

*Translation: I'm going to use my place of privilege to refute and deny the sufferings of those who do not have **white privilege** while at the same time **erasing** their personal and cultural history.*

Guerrilla Feminism.<sup>9</sup>

For Barbara Fields (1990: 99, cited in Roediger 1994: 181) the lack of the term *white people* in the United States Constitution is not surprising because she thinks that slang of that kind would be hopelessly imprecise in a legal document. According to Roediger (1994: 181), modern ethnology avoided the term *white* and, instead, used terms like *Caucasian* and *Aryan*. However, in 1790, the Constitution stated that a person needs to be white in order to become a naturalized citizen of the US. This caused a problem: who is actually white?

There is considerable uncertainty as to which nationalities and ethnicities would be included into the white people. Are Jews, southern Europeans, eastern Europeans, and Irish white? What

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<sup>9</sup> A meme by Guerrilla Feminism circling on Facebook earlier this year, of unknown origin.

about Arabs and Asian Indians? According to the racial theories, all of these would be counted as white but socially this was not truly accepted. According to Roediger (1994: 182), we know very little about how the Irish and Italians, for example, became white, how the Chinese and Japanese became nonwhite, and how Asian Indians and Mexican Americans were first identified as white at least by some and how they then became nonwhite.

White is also often seen as the default race and therefore is not necessarily mentioned. As Roediger (1994: 183) states, the Americans have a long tendency to conflate race and ethnicity. Roediger states that from at least the 1950's, immigrants and their descendants have seen themselves and have been seen by others as racially white but at the same time they are a part of a distinct ethnicity. At the same time, white pan-ethnic ideology has taken ground which means that it is possible that people see them as *white ethnic* more and more but at the same time are self-consciously of any ethnicity (*e.g.* Greek or Polish).

Whiteness is not just about the colour of one's skin. It deals with poverty, class and religion along with behaviour and customs. Anything that is seen as too different is Othered. As Roediger (1994: 184) states, blacks were seen as *smoked Irishmen* and it was said that to turn Jews inside out produced niggers. Immigrants who lived and worked in steel mines were deemed nonwhite. Also, as we can see from literature like the short story *A Place to Lie Down* by Nelson Algren (1935), association mattered; if you were white but poor and travelled with a black person, you were treated as a black.

According to Roediger (1994: 189), *white* has also been used as a synonym for *foreign*. In other words, the length of time spent in America made you whiter. Again, this comes down to Otherness. Also, as Roediger (1994: 190) continues, whiteness made you American (already by law) and so people who were "not yet" or "not quite" white, claimed whiteness. They were socially treated as blacks but they had better chances in claiming whiteness and mostly, when they could, they did, leaving the blacks behind. Indeed, as literature shows (*e.g.* Chestnutt's short story *The Wife of his Youth*, 1898), blacks try to claim whiteness, as well, but their skin colour makes it a lot more difficult.

In the United States, all blacks descending from slaves have some white blood in them. This is not the case in South Africa. Everybody with mixed race heritage are called *coloured* which

eliminates the problem of trying to figure out who is black enough and who white enough. This system is not without problems of its own, though, as we have seen already.

Frankenberg (1993) distinguishes three different phases in the US history involving race: essentialist racism, color- and power evasion, and race cognisance (reassertions and reorientations of race difference). The main idea is that at the root, American racism had to do with not only skin colour, but also cultural traits, such as language, religion, and politics. Hence, also races and ethnicities that are later perceived as white, were deemed the Other; as another race from white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs). For example, the Irish, the Italians, and the Jews being considered as second-class citizens also by the law (*e.g.* immigration restrictions). According to Frankenberg (1993: 139), this phase was started about five hundred years ago and it marks the date when *race was made into a difference*. However, this posed difficulties because of the many variables and thus colour became the main factor in race distinction. This would indicate that colour has always been the most Othering feature of them all on a large scale (as Roediger points out, as well). Frankenberg's power evasion refers to whites having the power to dictate the differences. The third phase comes to life after the 1950's. However, although these phases have been chronological, they are now in play together since the earlier ones were never forgotten. This is one of the reasons why there are so many different kinds of arguments used when talking about race. For example, denying race all together (the so-called *colour-blindness*) is in response to the essentialist racism that still lives in people's minds. Of course, there is a conflict in this since it is futile and sometimes harmful to deny something that we all intrinsically know exists. Frankenberg (1993: 138) states: "The very use of the term *race* raises the idea of difference, for *race* is above all a marker of difference, an axis of differentiation." However, the **kind** of difference the term raises depends on the different discourses that are rooted in different perceptions of race.

Along with racial definitions, Stetson Kennedy (1959: 52-53) writes about *passing*. It was illegal for blacks to pass as whites when it entailed violation of the segregation or anti-miscegenation laws, but an estimated five to eight million people having some ascertainable amount of black blood had passed over to whiteness by 1955. Thus, those half a million mixed race people in the Census of 1910 had become white by the Census of 1920. This created an industry for skin bleaching, hair-straightening, and plastic surgery (which still exists). As a white person, one could live, on an average, ten years longer because of better living conditions,

sanitation, public health services, and medical facilities: “The advantages of passing are psychological, social, economic, political, and biological.”

Goldberg (2001: 243) summarises the following:

If we go by history – and in this instance what else is there to go by? – then in class terms whiteness definitionally signifies social superiority, politically equates with control, economically equals property and privilege. [...] Clearly, the racial powers and privileges of whites are magnified or tempered by class position, gender, even the standing of and within a nation-state.

#### 4.2.3 Categorisation of races

*[...] my amalgamated Afro Boricua ancestry. [...] ‘cause when the day is done the color of my skin still marks me as an alien in the country of my birth.*

Maya del Valle, Def Jam poetry: *Descendancy*.

Gotanda (1995: 258) argues that in the United States it is self-evident who is black. The rules have been absorbed and no judicial screening is ever made. The current American racial classification follows two rules: **The rule of recognition**, *i.e.* any person whose black American ancestry is visible is black, and **the rule of descent**, *i.e.* any person who has known trace of African ancestry is black despite their appearance. This has been called the “one drop of blood” rule (or “the one-drop rule”). Anthropologist Marvin Harris calls this American system *hypodescent*.

There are also alternatives to this rule which have been in use in various times and overlapping one another. Gotanda (1995: 258-259) mentions that the current system lacks an intermediate, *i.e.* mixed race classification. There are four historically documented categorisations:

1. Mulatto: all mixed offspring are called mulattoes.
2. Named fractions: The fractional compositions of an individual’s racial ancestry determine the individual’s label. *E.g.* a mulatto is half white and half black, a quadroon is one-fourth black, and a sambo is one-fourth white. (See section 3.4: Moreau de Saint-Méry)
3. Majoritarian: the labels black and white are assigned according to the higher percentage of either.
4. Social continuum: This is a variation of the named fractions, but the individual’s social status is also taken into consideration. Thus, this system is less rigid than the named fractions. It is widely used in Latin America.

Gotanda points out that, at least theoretically, the following schemes are symmetrical and thus they do not suggest hierarchy.



However, Gotanda (1995: 259) mentions that when the hypodescent rule is combined with colour-blind constitutionalism, the system strongly supports racial subordination. Hypodescent brings forth racial subordination because it implies white racial purity. Since the system is also taken as functionally objective, it advances white interests in disguise. He emphasises that it entails a metaphor of purity and contamination.

The early colonial period of the current United States saw much more fluid racial categorisations than we see today, claims Gotanda (1995: 261). An individual's social status depended on their labour status as well as their place of origin. Usually, Africans were brought in as captives and Europeans as contractual or indentured servants. The English colonists in Maryland and Virginia (English-dominant colonies) called the various "unfree" people as *un-English* which included French, Africans, and also Scots. African labourers were labelled more specifically as *heathens*, *infidels*, and *negroes* in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. These labels were attempting to justify the treatment of slaves. English colonists came to prefer enslaved African labour over indentured European labour, and by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the amount of slaves had dramatically increased.

Gotanda (1995: 262) concludes:

One can, therefore, do more than assert generally that race is not scientific, or that race is socially constructed. One can say that our particular system of classification, with its metaphorical construction of racial purity for whites, has a specific history as a badge of enslaveability. As such, the metaphor of purity is not a logical oddity but, rather, an integral part of the construction of the system of racial subordination embedded in American society. Under color-blind constitutionalism, when race is characterized as objective and apolitical, this history is disguised and discounted.

Harris (1995: 276-291) states that whiteness has carried and produced a heavy legacy, and that it has blinded the society (in the United States). She claims also that it has thwarted conceptions of racial justice and of property. According to her, affirmative action can assist in putting away whiteness as property; affirmative action is not only consistent with the norms of equality, but essential so that the legacy of oppression can be shed.

#### 4.2.4 Jim Crow legislation

*The marriage of a white person with a negro, or mulatto, or a person who shall have one-eighth or more of negro blood, shall be unlawful and void.*

Mississippi (see app. 8).

After Reconstruction was disassembled, Jim Crow Laws arose first in the South and then spread to a majority of states in the US. They affectively enforced segregation in all spheres of society. The most common types of laws were the ones forbidding intermarriage and the ones ordering business owners and public institutions to separate their clientele.

According to Safire's Political Dictionary (2008, s.v. 'Jim Crow', 'separate but equal', 'segregation'), the term Jim Crow comes from a Kentucky plantation song. Crow is also infamously black. In 1829, entertainer Thomas Dartmouth Rice blacked his face and "jumped Jim Crow". The name became synonymous with *Negro* and, in 1840, the segregated car on the Boston Railroad was called the *Jim Crow*. The phrase *separate but equal*, which was used to justify Jim Crow Laws, poses the very question whether separate facilities can ever be equal. The desegregation of the armed services by President Truman was a major step in ending Jim Crow practices. The series of the Warren Court decisions of 1954 ended Jim Crow legislation officially (although, for example, in Virginia, miscegenation was illegal until 1967 when the Lovings won their case). The court concluded that *separate but equal* has no place in the field of public education.<sup>10</sup> Judge Thomas P. Hardy stated: "Segregation in the South is a way of life. [...] It is the means whereby we live in social peace, order and security (1957, before the Commonwealth Club of California, s.v. 'segregation').".

The difference between segregation and separation should be noted. As Safire's Political Dictionary (s.v. 'segregation') states, the word *segregation* was an attack against the *separate but equal* doctrine. Segregationists preferred the term *separation*. Segregation was contrasted with integration or desegregation. *Apartheid* was coined in South Africa and it comes from 'apart' and '-hood', meaning 'separation'. A South African author Alan Paton wrote in 1960: "*Segregation* is such an active word that it suggests someone is trying to segregate somebody else. So the word *apartheid* was introduced. Now it has such a stench in the nostrils of the world, they are referring to *autogenous development* (s.v. 'segregation')." In other words,

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<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, in the Declaration of Independence, where the US dissolves its bond with Great Britain, there is a very similar phrase: "the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitled them (s.v. 'separate but equal').".

*separation* has been used as a vague and seemingly positive term until it was tainted with negative connotations. *Segregation* was used to highlight the ugliness of *separate but equal*. In South Africa, *apartheid* was coined to create an illusion of a positive separation.

Safire's Political Dictionary (2008, s.v. 'busing to achieve racial balance') states that busing is another politically sensitive word from the 1960's and 1970's. In order to fix the racial imbalance of the neighbourhoods of the US, the busing of children to school from their neighbourhood to another neighbourhood was suggested and executed to a certain extent. Many were not pleased since this brought the desegregation very close to home. In the end, only the most dedicated civil rights activists defended the idea. Integration was seen as too intense and most preferred the more passive desegregation. Interestingly, the liberals used the term *involuntary busing* whilst the conservatives or anti-busing liberals preferred the term *forced busing*.

Segregation started slowly, but court rulings got tougher as time went by and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the strictest time for blacks in the US. Woodward (1955) in her book shows how the two races had not been divided even under slavery as strictly as under the Jim Crow laws. Also Stetson Kennedy (1959: 213) states that "the social gulf between the two races has constantly widened, so that today whites and nonwhites are farther apart than at any time in American history." Thus, the 1950's is an apt era to study. The same applies to South Africa since apartheid legislation commenced after 1948.

#### 4.2.5 Etiquette in the 1950's

*Inside the South you will find few if any opportunities to treat persons of the other race as equals.*  
Stetson Kennedy (1959: 203).

Etiquettes have been around forever, but they are changing constantly. They become extremely important in situations that are inflammable. Apart from legislation, Stetson Kennedy (1959: 203-204) discusses the unwritten *interracial* etiquette that dictated the way in which black and white people were supposed to behave. Obviously, this etiquette was stricter in the South, but there was not a single place in the US where it did not exist along with *intraracial* etiquettes. If one looked black, but acted white, for example, it caused a lot of trouble on both sides of the racial line. (This is still an issue; e.g. Obama acting white v. wiggers 'white niggers'.) However, class counted in interracial conduct sometimes: it could be helpful to belong to a more professional class in order to get some respect from whites.

Kennedy (1959: 205-206) continues about a statue by the name of *Good Negro*. It depicted a black man with a hat in hand and head bent and it was in Natchitoches, Louisiana.<sup>11</sup> The inscriptions said: “Erected by the citizens of Natchitoches in grateful recognition of the faithful service of the good darkies of Louisiana.” The statue represented the dominant view within the white community of the *Good Negro*; the one who knows his place and stays in it. The *Bad Nigger* was someone who refused the superior status of the whites. This is exactly what could be seen in the etiquette, since the main objective of it was to constantly remind of the prevailing power relations. A breach of etiquette would be followed by an apology. If that apology was not forthcoming, the next step would have been a physical assault by the offended and/or by a white mob or a police officer in which case you could be arrested. The worst case scenario would have been lynching. Also, if a white person breached the etiquette, they would have been punished, but the punishments were usually social ostracism and economic sanctions. However, the breach of etiquette on behalf of blacks were sometimes rather ludicrous. Whites could accuse a black person of “acting uppity” without proper cause. The main reasoning for the segregation, according to Kennedy (1959: 207), was that social intercourse would inevitably lead to sexual intercourse which in turn would have been biologically bad since the master race had to be protected. The following are the commandments of interracial etiquette in the 1950’s according to Kennedy (1959: 207-227) that have to do with language (the rest of the list is in *app. 2*):

4. Interracial introductions: nonwhites should always be introduced to whites, not *vice versa*.
5. Interracial hand-shaking is taboo.
6. Interracial speaking has been gradually withdrawn and hence this may have led to literal muteness in some cases.
7. Interracial addressing: whites should *never* say “Mr.”, “Mrs.”, “sir”, or “Ma’am” to nonwhites, but always use their first name. Nonwhites should *always* say “Mr.”, “Mrs.”, “sir”, or “Ma’am” to whites and never call them by their first names. Nursemaids are to call the children as Mr. Bob, or Miss. Jean, for example, as soon as they reach puberty. If a nonwhite person does not know the name of a white person and is forced to address them, they should be called *Bossman*, *Captain* or some other title of respect. When there

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<sup>11</sup> It was erected in 1927 and removed in 1968 and put into a museum (the LSU Rural Life Museum, Baton Rouge; WIZ 2012).

are many whites, the correct plural is *white-folks*. Nonwhites are frequently called *boys* and *girls* regardless of age or class unless they are gray-haired in which case the terms would be *uncle* or *auntie*. The correct ways of addressing apply to telephone conversations and written correspondence, as well. The maid must call the caller a “Mr.” or a “Mrs.” to reveal her identity and in letters, when writing to a nonwhite person, the letter should start with the name only and lacking *dear*.

8. In conversations, the white usually takes the lead and it is wise to let them do that. One should always bear in mind while conversing that whites are superior and nonwhites are inferior and everything should be fine.
9. Things a nonwhite cannot say or even suggest: Never suggest that a white person is lying. Never accuse whites of dishonourable intentions. Never suggest that the white person is of an inferior class. Never show superior knowledge. Never curse a white person. Never laugh at a white person. Never compliment the physical attractiveness of a white person of the opposite sex.
10. Talking back is ill-advised, but if it has to be done, the acceptable method is to ask a non-belligerent question, such as: “Do you think that’s the right way to do it?” Also, sometimes a complaint can be heard when it is put into a song.

#### 4.2.6 Affirmative action in the United States

*[...] prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin.*

The Civil Rights Act of 1964.

As already mentioned before (see section 4.1.1), Steinberg (2000: 64-65) states that the grand type of segregation and oppression in the United States is its racial division of labour. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century there was an invisible colour line between the North and the South: blacks were not allowed to the industrial jobs of the North. It was a system of *occupational apartheid*, as Steinberg (*op. cit.* 65) calls it. He claims that the industrial revolution was for whites only. The thing that made this possible was mass immigration from Europe. Black leaders complained how these immigrants were taking jobs away from the blacks. In the South, on the other hand, black labour was indispensable. This was changed only during World War I when immigration decreased drastically, and the *Great Migration* of blacks began from the South to the North.

Steinberg (2000: 66-67) continues that in the 1950’s two-thirds of blacks lived in the South, and half of those in rural areas. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, agricultural technology made black

labour obsolete: “It was not the Civil War but the mechanization of agriculture a whole century later that finally liberated blacks from their historical role as agricultural laborers in the South’s feudal economy (*ibid.*).” Unfortunately, when blacks arrived North, European immigrants had already established their own occupational structures and controlled the industries with ethnic nepotism. Also, the export of manufacturing jobs had already begun and hence the manufacturing industry was in decline.

Steinberg (2000: 68-69) argues that the civil rights revolution was a struggle for freedom, not equality; it gave full rights of citizenship but the legacy of inequality of two centuries of slavery and one century of Jim Crow could not be erased. There is still a huge gap between the incomes of whites and blacks in the US. Black leaders had been demanding equality for a long time but were unsuccessful. After civil rights legislation, even the liberals were against any further actions. Thus, affirmative action policy evolved through a series of executive orders, court decisions, and administrative policies instead of legislative process (unlike in South Africa, see section 4.1.1). It is also interesting to note that Nixon, who got elected “on the basis of a southern strategy that appealed to popular racism and who later appointed two southern racists to the Supreme Court (*op.cit.* 69)”, was behind the Philadelphia Plan (which aimed to enforce the hirings of blacks in building trades that were controlled by white unions). Some have postulated theories where Nixon wanted to drive a wedge between blacks and whites. Steinberg is a bit more cautious and blames the context: it was 1969 and the Vietnam War was in critical stage. Riots needed to be prevented.

As Steinberg (2000: 70-71) states, the Philadelphia Plan was resurrected despite Nixon’s objections and it got before the Supreme Court. The Department of Labor extended the Plan to all federal contractors, including colleges and universities. Steinberg concludes that affirmative action was the most important policy initiative since the civil rights revolution. Affirmative action helped to ease the gap between black and white labour. However, affirmative action is continually attacked. Bill Clinton has famously said “mend it, don’t end it”, but this has been cynically assumed to mean a quiet dismantle of affirmative action programmes. Steinberg warns that the ending of affirmative action will lead to a steady attrition of many of the social and economic accomplishments of the post-civil rights era. Indeed, Steinberg appears to embrace affirmative action completely without seeing any of its faults. This is why Steinberg’s statements should be taken in with a grain of salt.

Brunner and Rowen (2007) stick completely with the facts on affirmative action. The following two paragraphs are according to the website written by Brunner and Rowen. They explain the legislation trail of affirmative action in the United States in detail.

President Kennedy created the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity in 1961 which mandates that “projects financed with federal funds ‘take affirmative action’ to ensure that hiring and employment practices are free of racial bias”. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 “prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin”. President Johnson explained that affirmative action is necessary because centuries of slavery beg for more than just plain freedom. He ordered government contractors to take affirmative action and, in 1967, affirmative action was expanded to cover discrimination on the basis of gender (see intersectionality in section 3.3). Nixon’s Philadelphia Order (Plan) of 1969 was a forceful plan to guarantee fair hiring practices.

In 1978, Supreme Court imposed limitations on affirmative action. It ensured that it did not come at the expense of the rights of the majority. The attempt was to exclude reverse discrimination. This was amended in 1980 when the Supreme Court required that 15 percent of funds for public work should be set aside for qualified minority contractors. In 1987, Alabama was forced to hire black troopers because they had not abided the affirmative action: “For every white hired or promoted, one black would also be hired or promoted until at least 25 % of the upper ranks of the department were composed of blacks.” In 1989 and 1995, affirmative action faced some serious scrutiny. Clinton called for the elimination of quotas, the preference of unqualified individuals, reverse (positive) discrimination, and affirmative action after opportunity purposes had been achieved. Two years later, California banned affirmative action all together and, in 1998, Washington did the same. In 2000, Florida banned race as a factor in college admissions, but, in Michigan, using race as a factor was ruled constitutional. However, this was reversed and re-reversed in consecutive years and, finally in 2003, the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action but called for change to the admission procedures. In 2006, assigning students to schools whilst considering race, was deemed unconstitutional in Seattle. Two years later, Nebraska and Colorado passed a ban for race and gender based preferences.

According to Safire’s political Dictionary (2008, *s.v.* ‘backlash’, ‘quota’), when the advancement of blacks affects whites, especially in the job market, a reaction against this advancement may occur. This reaction is called a backlash. Backlashes have happened

especially after the *Civil Rights Movement* and during affirmative action. *Affirmative action* equals *quota* in the dictionary because in the US this was and is the reality, and the dictionary states that *affirmative action* was coined as a phrase during the Eisenhower Administration. In the civil rights backlash of the 1970's, the term *quota* became politically sensitive and also many blacks were against quotas because they believed it abridged the civil rights of the whites. Indeed, quotas were called reverse discrimination and the Constitution wanted to be maintained *color-blind*. The problem with quotas is that they do not permit explanations; the quota needs to be filled with, for example, qualified or, indeed, unqualified workers.

#### 4.3 Race and power relations

*Anita: "Life can be bright in America."*

*Boys: "If you can fight in America."*

*Girls: "Life is all right in America."*

*Boys: "If you're all white in America."*

Stephen Sondheim. (West Side Story) *America*. 1957.

**Race is a creation that is based on power relations.** In other words, the ones in power have subordinated the others. This has been justified by making the others sub-humans. However, the **prominent underlying reason**, as we can see from this paper, **has been cheap labour**. The source for this has been Othered groups, such as enslaved people, indentured servants, captives (*e.g.* the US and Australia), immigrants (*e.g.* Southern and Eastern European immigrants in the US; Chinese and Indians in Africa and the US), illegal immigrants (*e.g.* in the US), *etc.* Bernal (1987: 241) states: "If Europeans were treating Blacks as badly as they did throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Blacks had to be turned into animals or, at best, sub-humans; the noble Caucasian was incapable of treating other full humans in such ways."

Power is behind everything, but at the same time, the ones at the bottom of the human heap are, in particular, blacks. In other words, the more different a person is perceived, the easier it is for the ones in power to Other them. Thus, physical, cultural, and sociological features do play a significant role in Othering. Dubow (1995: 23) states that physiognomy has been a powerful way to register Otherness, and, before, precise, scientific measurement confirmed this.

It is important to realise that there is discrimination within discriminated groups, as well. For example, immigrants in the US have discriminated against blacks, and a black man can discriminate a black woman, as well as, heterosexual blacks can discriminate against



homosexual blacks. In other words, there is always hierarchy in discrimination. According to Dubow (1995: 21), Hottentots, *i.e.* Namas in Namibia, and Australian aboriginals have been perceived as the lowest of the low within “savage races”. However, mixed race people are often caught in between whereas blacks have their own culture and a sense of belonging, as Mandaza (1997) points out. On the other hand, according to intersectionality, different forms of discrimination are linked, *i.e.* one form feeds on another form and, thus, they often co-occur (Warren 1990).

Dubow (1995: 289) is worried about rising racism in the modern world. He calls it the revival of racism although he points out that it is not scientific racism. According to him, the economic recession of the early 1990’s resulted in the emergence of intolerant ethnic nationalisms linked with right-wing politics. We have also been seeing this during the economic depression of today.

## 5. Results

Since the Jim Crow Laws are state laws and since they were passed and revoked at various times, they cannot be found online as a complete collection (and especially when considering how many of them were in force particularly in the 1950's). Therefore, the Jim Crow laws used in this study are from Stetson Kennedy, who is a journalist that infiltrated into Ku Klux Klan. He wrote several books and one of them offers the anti-miscegenation legislation state by state and also most of the racial definitions state by state. These two pieces of legislation can be considered as the most prominent and imminent laws of segregation and, thus, I will use the corresponding pieces of apartheid legislation, as well, especially the Population Registration Act of 1950. The present-day data can all be found online just like the apartheid laws: Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, affirmative action legislation in South Africa (EE and BEE) and the US, the statistics of the South African Census of 2011, The United States Census of 2010, and the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

### 5.1 South Africa

#### 5.1.1 Few notes on South African racial terminology

Before we get to the main results, Cornevin (1980) has explained some of the confusing terminology and, although there may be new terms in use today, all of the terms she mentions are definitely still around. According to her (*op. cit.* 21), many English-language publications use the term *African* to refer to black Africans, but the problem with that euphemism is that in Afrikaans the term would be *Afrikaner*, which refers to Afrikaans-speaking South Africans. And, of course, *African* can refer to any person residing in Africa. This is why it was not used in any **official** English-language publications then, or indeed nowadays. She also provides the politically correct, official terms throughout time: 1. *native* (as in apartheid legislation), 2. (from 1955 onwards) *Bantu*, 3. (from 1977 onwards) *black*. (See continuum of PC terms in section 2.5.)

Cornevin (1980: 21) continues with *Afrikaner* which was superseded by the terms *Boer* or *Burgher*. However, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were referred to as *Afrikaanders*. *Afrikaner* has been in use from the First World War and they are descendants of the Dutch, German, and French settlers who arrived from 1652 onwards. *Apartheid*, meaning 'separation', or 'setting apart', was superseded by *separate development*, *multinational development*, or *pluralist democracy*.

*Bantu* is especially obscure, since it is in fact a linguistic term denoting a language family. It derives from the root *-ntu*, ‘individual’, which can be found in all of the languages of the family. Therefore, *Umntu* means a person and *Bantu* several persons. South African blacks were called *Bantus* between 1955 and 1977, but it is incorrect usage, since the term *Bantu* is already plural and refers to languages only. (Cornevin 1980: 21.)

According to Cornevin (1980: 21-22), *Black Consciousness* arose in 1970 and its supporters rejected the term *non-white* and replaced it with a more positive (their opinion) collective term for Africans, coloured, and Indians: *blacks*. This, of course, stirs up confusion, but seems to be a form of color-blindness. *Coloured*, she continues, had been replaced by *brown* in some papers in 1980. I have never seen this term in any other document.

Another confusing term in the South African context is the *British*, or indeed the *English* which refer to the white South Africans who speak English as their mother tongue. In 1980, they were also called *English-speaking South Africans (ESSA)*, which again is confusing since most South Africans speak English, especially nowadays given the negative connotations of *Afrikaans*. (Cornevin 1980: 22.) On southafrica.com, they are called *English-speakers* and *Afrikaans-speakers* are *Afrikaners*.

Cornevin (1980: 22) gives the terms for the black residing areas throughout time. They were first called the *Reserves* (1913-1936), and then *Bantustans*, but in 1972 they were given the name *Homeland*. This is clear verbal hygiene. *Indians* were replaced by *Asians* in time, but most of them come from India or Pakistan and they arrived in the province of Natal from 1860 onwards.

Lastly, Cornevin (1980: 22) states that *European* has been replaced by *white* in all official texts since 1971. *European* might have been the preferred euphemism at some point, but at least in apartheid legislation *white* is used frequently and consistently.

In these, one can see a strong British influence: *native* and *reserves* are terms that are the same or closely linked to terms used in the US, for example. Also the term *aboriginal*, which appears in apartheid legislation, is nowadays a term that mainly refers to Australian aboriginals so its usage has been specialised.

Mandaza (1997: 147, 149, 183-184) reveals that the term *half caste* was used to refer to coloureds before apartheid legislation (until the 1930's). *Coloured* was as attempt to be non-racist, but this turned to be impossible. (See section 4.1.3.)

#### 5.1.2 Politically correct racial terminology in South Africa in the 1950's

The change of government occurred in 1948. The social change meant that the whites had a monopoly on the constitutional means and they did not want to control only the relationships between whites and other groups, but also wanted to fragment African peoples by implementing policies that strengthened tribal solidarity and raised barriers between blacks, coloureds, and Indians. (Lemon 1987: 49.)

As Lemon (1987: 50-53) puts it, apartheid was a combination of laws that affected all aspects of life: the voting rights, self-governing laws for blacks separated black peoples, the Group Areas Act of 1950 physically separated the races and ethnicities, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 forced different races to use separate public amenities in every sphere of life, and education through the Bantu Education Act of 1953 which made black (in this *bantu* refers to blacks) education state run and which sole purpose was to educate blacks to 'stay in their place' and promoted tribalism and pre-industrial way of life. Also political activities were suppressed by legislation amongst non-whites. When broken, severe penalties occurred (*e.g.* Mandela). In this research, however, the focus is on one particular act that is tightly connected to many others: the Population Registration Act of 1950 that Lemon (1987: 50) calls "fundamental to the whole apartheid design" along with the Group Areas Act. It created a racially classified national register which in turn enabled other legislation given the artificiality of the coloured category. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 made marriages between whites and non-whites illegal (miscegenation) and the Immorality Amendment Act of 1950 prohibited extramarital sexual relations between whites and non-whites (blacks, coloureds, and Indians mutual relations were unaffected by these laws since the main concern was the purity of the white race). However, without the Race Classification Act (as the Population Registration Act was popularly known [YMCA 1986: 42]), the latter ones would not have been possible.

The Population Registration Act required that every inhabitant had to be classified and registered according to their racial characteristics. There were three basic categories: native, white, and coloured. Indian (South Asians from the former British India) was added later because they were seen as having “no historical right to the country”. The criteria consisted of outer appearance (hair, skin colour, facial features), general acceptance and social standing (home language and efficiency in Afrikaans, living area, friends, employment, socioeconomic status, and eating and drinking habits). (Columbia University education site.)

*Table 1.* The politically correct racial terminology in South Africa in the 1950's (*app. 3*).

Main division	Sub-divisions
native	Xhosa, Zulu, Venda, Tswana, Shangaan, Swazi, Ndebele, North Sotho, South Sotho
coloured (person)	<i>e.g.</i> Malay, Cape coloured, other coloured, Griqua
Indian	Indian, Chinese, other Asian
white (person)	-

As can be seen, the black race had the now pejorative term *native* as a category. According to the act (*app. 3*), *native* means “a person who in fact is or is generally accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa.” A *coloured person* means “a person who is not a white person or a native.” A *white person* has a lengthier description: “[A] person who in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, but does not include a person who, although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person.” People were also classified further into sub-categories which were called *ethnic or other groups*. The native category was divided into nine different ethnic sub-divisions which are still in use (*e.g.* the nine official African languages of South Africa). The coloured people were also sub-categorised and later also the Asians, but these categories were not as fixed as the black ones were. However, whites were never further classified although there were at least two very distinct categories (and, of course, there were people from other European countries, as well), the ones descending from the English and the Afrikaners. The whites did not feel the need to keep these two separate by law. Their co-operation also guaranteed stronger white domination through sheer number of members. All people had to register and receive an identity card, but only blacks were forced to carry it on their person at all times (YMCA 1986: 42).

Cornevin (1980: 69) states that the English and the Afrikaners have great differences, but officially the whites were represented as a single white nation, and thus defined solely by skin colour. She (*op. cit.* 70) continues that there are not in fact nine linguistic groups in South Africa, but four. In *South Africa 1977* (1978: 82 [general history of South Africa], cited in Cornevin 1980: 69), it is stated that the major group of southern Bantu is subdivided into four main linguistic-cultural groups: Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Venda, and Shangaan-Tsonga. Thus, for example, of the nine official languages, Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, and Ndebele belong to the Nguni group and are mutually intelligible to a large extent. Also socio-politically they are closely linked. On the other hand, the English-speaking and the Afrikaans-speaking whites have great differences between them. They fought many wars and Cornevin (*op. cit.* 74) argues that Afrikaner nationalism simply emerged from an anti-British into an anti-African phase during apartheid. In other words, the black peoples are more closely related to one another than claimed by the apartheid administration (who wanted them as separate as possible) and the whites much less homogeneous than they wanted people to believe.

All in all, then, apartheid legislation was definitely blatant institutional racism. The legislation was used to create races by Othering and labelling. Officially, euphemisms and orthophemisms were used to sugarcoat these underlying aims, but apartheid legislation did not shy away from taboos: in fact, it prepared to tackle them face on.

### 5.1.3 Present-day politically correct racial terminology in South Africa

#### (i) Politically correct racial terminology used in affirmative action legislation

In South Africa, affirmative action is based on two main acts: the Employment Equity Act of 1998 (EE) and the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003 (BEE). The former wants to address the disparities in employment, occupation and income which are the result of apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices and which cannot be redressed by repealing the discriminatory laws (EE; *app.* 4). The latter seeks “to establish a legislative framework for the promotion of black economic empowerment (BEE; *app.* 5).” In both of them, the term *black people* is used and defined as follows: “[A] generic term which means Africans, Coloureds and Indians. (EE, BEE)” One can see the effects of *Black Consciousness Movement* in this from the 1970 (see section 5.1.1). In addition to that, in EE there is a definition for *designated groups* which refers to “black people, women and people with disabilities (EE)”. This brings forth intersectionality: different discriminated and disadvantaged groups have been

labelled according to the most prominent and discriminated group, the blacks and as such all of them have been equated. In other words, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination are seen as part of the same matrix of domination (see intersectionality in section 3.3). Since the focus in South Africa has historically been race, it seems only natural to use the term *black*. However, I do not think this sort of use of the term would be politically correct in official texts in the US or indeed many other countries. It can also hide the other groups and highlight the racial aspect of the problem. In South Africa, race is the biggest question so it is probably not a problem there, but in general the term might cause confusion, especially since most people do not read the definitions-section in acts and other legal documents.

In South Africa, extraordinarily, there are more than one minority group that exceed the size or are about the same size as the group in power, *i.e.* whites: blacks, and women (if minority is defined by the amount of power). In the Census of 1960, South Africa's population was composed of blacks by 68.3 percent, whites by 19.3 percent, coloured by 9.4 percent, and of Asians by 3.0 percent (cited in Lemon 1987: 196). Nowadays also coloureds exceed the number of whites and the composition is as follows: 79.2 percent are blacks, 8.9 percent coloured, 2.5 percent Indian or Asian, 8.9 percent white, and 0.5 percent of other (Lehohla 2012a: 21). There are also slightly more women than men (*op. cit.* 32). In most of the Western world, most minorities are small except when it comes to women who have less power and can thus be called a minority although they can even exceed the men in number.

There are no sub-divisions mentioned in these laws, but the nine African peoples created during apartheid era still exist in other official documents and practices, such as in the South African Constitution (ch. 1:6) where the official languages are named: "Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu". However, as one can see, some of them have been grouped together according to their language families which means that the families have been recognised. Also, the preamble of the Constitution finishes with the phrase "God bless South Africa" and it has been written in four different languages besides English and Afrikaans, not nine.<sup>12</sup> (*App. 6.*)

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<sup>12</sup> The original phrases are as follows: "Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso. God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa. Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika. (Preamble of the Constitution of South Africa, *app. 6.*)"

Table 2. The politically correct racial terminology in current South African legislation.

Main division	Further division	Sub-divisions
black	African	Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu
black	Coloured	-
black	Indian	-
(white, not mentioned)	(white, not mentioned)	-

Since it is a legal document, also the term *black* is defined which reveals the division of races from the apartheid era still in use today: *African*, *Coloured*, *Indian*, and the absent *white* which exists implicitly in the text since without it the separations would not have to be made. This inadvertently shows the hierarchy of the terms. The only difference here compared to the apartheid era act is the term for black people. As Cornevin (1980: 21) states, the term *African* is widely used in English-language documents to refer to black Africans, but it is a problematic term since it is so generic and in Afrikaans it translates as *Afrikaner*. It is, indeed, a clear euphemism. However, the term *coloured* does not seem to have any more politically correct term than the term itself. This could be seen as surprising since especially in the US (which is very influential in the world and also in the black communities in Africa) the term would be unspeakable not only because it is nowadays a pejorative term for blacks in the US, but also because of its meaning. Cornevin (op. cit 22) adds the term *brown*, but it has not been used in any of the documents I have researched or in any other texts I have read (and I have also never heard it used in Africa). The term is capitalised unlike in apartheid era legislation, but the term *black* is not. (The capitalisations vary greatly from text to text so I will not focus on them more.)

The term *Indian* is still in use instead of *Asian*. Most of the Asians in South Africa are Indian historically, so they are the ones that have been discriminated, as well (they were indentured workers in Natal in the 18<sup>th</sup> century). However, nowadays there are growing populations of other Asian groups, especially the Chinese which are excluded from the acts at least explicitly (southafrica.info). This may cause problems in the future.

In the Constitution (ch. 2:9; *app.* 6), under Bill of Rights, there is a section about equality. There can be found a paragraph that is very close to a phrase in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (see section 5.2.3 and *app.* 7):



The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

In other words, in some South African laws, races, or populations, must be referred to directly and explained, but in the Constitution, the American style has been adapted.

(ii) Politically correct racial terminology used in the South African Census of 2011

In South Africa, the latest national Census was taken in 2011. Here are some of the topics that were on the questionnaire: age, sex, relationship, marital status, population group, language. In the previous one in 2001, language was not included. However, in 1996, both language and religion were asked. In all of the censuses the place of birth and citizenship were asked along with current residence. (Lehohla 2012b.)

The racial terms used in the Census of 2011 in South Africa are as follows (Ngyende 2011: 12):

Black African  
Coloured  
Indian or Asian  
White  
Other

These are called *population groups*. The term *race* was not used, but population groups were questioned which correspond with cultural races. All in all, in South African documents the term *group* is very common probably due to its generic nature. The use of *population* is very politically correct nowadays (see section 3.5). In addition to these, people's mother tongue was asked which gives information on the subdivisions although the categories themselves are missing. This is also very politically correct on the surface although the underlying information can still be collected. The eleven official languages and sign language are specified in the statistics. (Lehohla 2012a: 21, 23, 26, 27.)

As can be seen, the terms are reminiscent of the apartheid era and the less confusing terms are used: instead of *African*, the term used is *Black African* and instead of *Indian* the category is *Indian or Asian* so as to include also other Asian groups. Also, the term coloured is used probably because there is no better term. However, on southafrica.info it states the following:

”Coloured” South Africans (the label is **contentious**) are a people of mixed lineage descended from slaves brought to the country from east and central Africa, the indigenous Khoisan who lived in the Cape at the time, indigenous Africans and whites. The majority speak Afrikaans.

Southafrica.com (boldness added).

The classification is very simple, understandable, and, most importantly, as politically correct as possible. This would suggest that South Africans in general have an uncomplicated relationship with race since they have to. Race is everywhere and one has to deal with it on a daily basis. Compared to the US Census of 2010, this one is highly simplistic indeed. Some terms are controversial, but there are no more politically correct terms for them, and it would also seem that South Africans rather use them than make up more long and confusing alternatives. As we will see next, this is not always the case in the US.

## 5.2 The United States

### 5.2.1 Few notes on racial terminology in the US

*Phil: “Blind side was the black kid who played tight end.*

*Alex: “Offensive line.”*

*Phil: “Sorry, African American kid.”*

*Modern Family, season 3, episode 4 (Lloyd and Levitan 2009-).*

According to SPD (*s.v.* ‘black’), the term *black* was reintroduced in the 1960’s by the advocates of the *Civil Rights Movement*. Earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the term was used as a racial slur (ancestors of “black Africa”) although before it was also used as a neutral term for the Republicans who were for abolition and reconstruction. Along with black racial pride, the use of *black* increased although white writers referred to blacks as *Negroes*, *colored people* or *nonwhites* so as to avoid offence. Also the euphemism *minority group* was in use. “Black power” became a slogan in 1966 and the slogan “Black is beautiful” was prominent in a poster campaign launched by Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1967. According to W. E. B. DuBois (in a letter written in 1928, cited by S. I. Hayakawa), before, *Negroes* meant black people and *colored* were mulattoes. At that time, mulattoes hated the blacks and were insulted if they were *Negroes*: “But, we are not insulted – not you and I. We are quite as proud of our black ancestors as our white. And perhaps a little prouder.”

Cartoonist Jules Feiffer (SPD *s.v.* ‘black’) wrote: “As a matter of racial pride we want to be called *blacks*. Which has replaced the term *Afro-American* – Which replaced *Negroes*—Which replaced *colored people* – Which replaced *darkies* – Which replaced *blacks*.” Safire concludes

that by the 1990's, the preferred term had become *African-American*. Nowadays, *African American* competes with *black*, but as can be seen in media sometimes (e.g. the quote from *Modern Family*), *African American* is usually considered the most politically correct term. (See continuum of PC terms in section 2.5.)

*Hyphenated American* is a concept first introduced by Farmer & Henley's slang dictionary in 1893. There are *African-Americans* and *Asian-Americans*, but also *Irish-American* and *Finnish-American* to denote ethnicity since originally the aim was to denote naturalised citizens of the US. In relation to these, *American Indian* was objected to by many aboriginal Americans. They preferred *Native American*. Indeed, later on some of them preferred also the former *Indian*. This confusion is still unresolved. The racial slur *half-breed* has usually referred to half Native American, half white people. *People of color* is embraced by many and President Obama identifies himself as *of mixed heritage*. (SPD s.v. 'hyphenated American'.)

Stetson Kennedy (1959: 216) brings forth one more term: "In a typical Atlanta case, the defendant was summoned by the court clerk as 'Clifford Hines, Nigra' (a prevalent compromise pronunciation midway between *Negro* and *nigger*)." Since it has been used in court, it must have been rather politically correct, although, of course, it seems like a way for the court clerks to address blacks as *nigger* without getting caught. The term is also in OED (s.v. 'nigra') where it is stated to be colloquial and regional (chiefly the South).

### 5.2.2 Politically correct racial terminology in the United States in the 1950's

*Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix.*

Trial judge Leon M. Bazile 1959 (Loving v. Virginia 1967, Buirski 2011).

Stetson Kennedy was a white American journalist who infiltrated into the Ku Klux Klan and wrote an exposé on it (*I rode with the Ku Klux Klan/The Klan Unmasked*, 1954, published by Jean-Paul Sartre). He also wrote a book called *Jim Crow Guide the U.S.A.: The Laws, Customs and Etiquette Governing the Conduct of Nonwhites and Other Minorities as Second-Class Citizens*. He wrote it around 1955, but it was published in 1959. I will use his information on the laws governing the definitions and marriages of the 29 states that had Jim Crow laws. The racial definition laws are missing in eight states so the emphasis will be on the anti-miscegenation laws in the analysis so that this flaw could be minimised. Also, I am interested

mainly in the terms used in legal language and thus am not doing a quantitative analysis in any case. The following legislation was in force in the 1950's. The Jim Crow laws restricted and segregated blacks in every aspect of their lives, and I am focusing on the racial definitions themselves and the anti-miscegenation laws can be considered as some of the most restricting pieces of legislation. Kennedy did not provide specifics of other laws, but these two areas of law he meticulously explained in his book.

According to Stetson Kennedy (1959: 47-48), in the Census of 1930, people having one-half or more Negro blood were listed as *Negroes*, while those having less were recorded as *mulattoes*. In the 1950's, this changed; now the census-takers were instructed to put *Negro* for everybody with mixed white and Negro parentage. It would seem that it has always been easier to classify blacks as blacks in contrast to whites than to classify multiple races at the same time. For example, according to the Bureau, when a person has mixed Indian and Negro blood, they should be reported as *Negro* unless the Indian blood definitely predominates. However, if one has mixed white and Indian blood, but one is no more than one-fourth Indian, they could be qualified as white. When nonwhite races are involved, the race is determined according to the father's race. In other words, persons with black mothers and white fathers were classified as *black*, but persons with black mothers and Chinese fathers were reported as *Chinese*.

The following table has been accumulated from Kennedy's (1959: 48-50, 63-71) information on the discriminatory laws. In the 1950's, there were 29 states out of 48 that had statutory definitions of race and/or anti-miscegenation laws. In the other states, the courts decided when necessary. The following table shows these states and the terms that were used in legislation. In all of them, marriage between races was legally restricted, but only 13 of the states had separate definitions of the races.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Kennedy explains the racial definitions of the first 13 states of the alphabetical list, but not the rest. However, in some of the marriage laws, he mentions also that there are either discrepancies or no racial definitions at all. Since I cannot get to the actual laws, I have to rely on the information that Kennedy provides.

Table 3. A summary of the politically correct racial terms in the US in the 1950's (see app. 3).

Frequently used terms	Mentioned terms	Phrases used
-Negro (or negro): 28/29 states -white: 28/29 -Mongolian: 13/29 -mulatto: 9/29 -American Indian: 7/29 -Malay: 7/29	-Caucasian 3/29 -colored 2/29 -griffe 1/29 -quadroon 1/29 -octoroon 1/29 -half-breed 1/29 - <i>mestizo</i> 1/29 -Creole 1/29 -Japanese 1/29 -Hindu: 1/29 -Chinese 1/29 -West Indian 1/29 -Asiatic Indian 1/29 -Indian 1/29 -Kanaka 1/29	-mixed/African/Negro/white blood -“ascertainable traces” -“appreciable amount of Negro blood” -“visible or distinct Negro blood” -“persons of color” (a euphemism for non-white, see collective black)

The most prominent term is definitely *Negro* or *negro* depending on the state. Kennedy himself uses *Negro* which most likely was the PC form of the 1950's. However, in the laws themselves the term is always written with a miniscule. Only one state of the 29 fails to mention the term: in Oklahoma marriage is forbidden between anyone of *African descent* and whites. The term *white* is written with a miniscule, although it is occasionally written with a capital letter in other texts. The term *mulatto* is always written with a miniscule and is a fairly common term, as well, which means that the one-drop rule was not in every state. *Mongolians* (meaning Chinese in most cases; by this time there were a lot of Chinese immigrants especially along the Western coast and they were evidently seen as a threat) are mentioned quite a few times as well as *Malays*. *Caucasian* is mentioned in three states. This is somewhat surprising because whites are rarely mentioned as anything else than *white* and *Caucasian* is a rare term in any context (except maybe detective series). Both *Mongolian* and *Caucasian* seem very sterile terms that seek a high level political correctness.

Native Americans were a concern only in eight states. There were probably so few in the other states that they were not seen as a problem. Also, along with the absence, Native Americans were sometimes given a special status: In Oregon, American Indians were white enough to marry whites when they were half Indians and half white whereas the blacks, Chinese, and Malays had to be three quarters white. Other states (*e.g.* Nevada), however, equate Native Americans with blacks. In Virginia, when a Native American had only 1/16<sup>th</sup> Native American blood and was otherwise white, they were defined as white.

In Georgia and Louisiana, *a person of color* is mentioned. It is a phrase that is used to include everybody else except whites; it is a collective term (like *black* in South Africa, or *nonwhite*). *A person of color* can still be used as a rather PC term when one needs to address the race of groups of people as a whole. This might have led to the term *colored* since *persons of color* was usually referring to blacks.

As mentioned, blacks are the only group stated in every single one of these states which indicates that they were seen as the root of all racial problems. Without them these laws would have never come true since other groups were never seen as such a big threat as the blacks. One can also see an urge to define blacks in more detail than the others. In most cases, other races have been omitted altogether or then specified according to the black specifications (except Native Americans in some states as mentioned above).

Some states have highly intricate definitions. One of these is definitely Louisiana which is the only state using the terms of *named fractions* (see section 4.2.3): *negro*, *griffe*, *mulatto*, *quadroon*, *octoroon*. The others refer to these as 1/8<sup>th</sup> or 1/16<sup>th</sup> and not by the actual names. New Orleans and Louisiana have always been the worst places for slaves in the US and so it does not surprise that 1) they have felt the need to specify all of these differences, and that 2) they have had specific terms for all of these. This would indicate that the terms have always been in use in everyday life in contrast to the numbered ones that sound rather clumsy in everyday speech. *Blood* is also a frequent term which, along with the named fractions comes originally from Moreau de Saint-Méry (see section 3.4). It refers to the ancestry and race at the same time.

Georgia did not specify races in detail within the racial groups, but it did feel the need to mention separately *Asiatic Indians*, *West Indian* (which was not just a racial category, but

referred to anybody of any ancestry from the West Indies), *Mongolian*, *Chinese*, and *Japanese* rather than trusting that the term *Mongolian* would apply to all of these. Also, Georgia is one of the few states that have used the terms *Caucasian* and *colored*, and that uses the more specific phrase *persons of African descent*. This all indicates that Georgia wanted to be especially specific and thorough when it comes to race.

There are two states that Kennedy provides us with information on discrepancies in the racial definitions: Texas and Virginia. Apparently, in Texas, race was not defined, but in the anti-miscegenation law all interracial marriages are prohibited. However, only some were punished: if one party was 1/8<sup>th</sup> or more black. The same applies to Virginia, except that then one had to have at least 1/4<sup>th</sup> of black blood. As mentioned above, Virginia also counted 1/16<sup>th</sup> Native Americans as white.

In Arizona, many races were mentioned in the definitions, but blacks are defined in detail. Arizona is the only state that mentioned Hindus as one human group. In the anti-miscegenation law, whites and blacks were not allowed to marry, which is to be expected in this context, but Hindus were also not allowed to marry whites. The other groups that were legally defined were not restricted in the anti-miscegenation law.

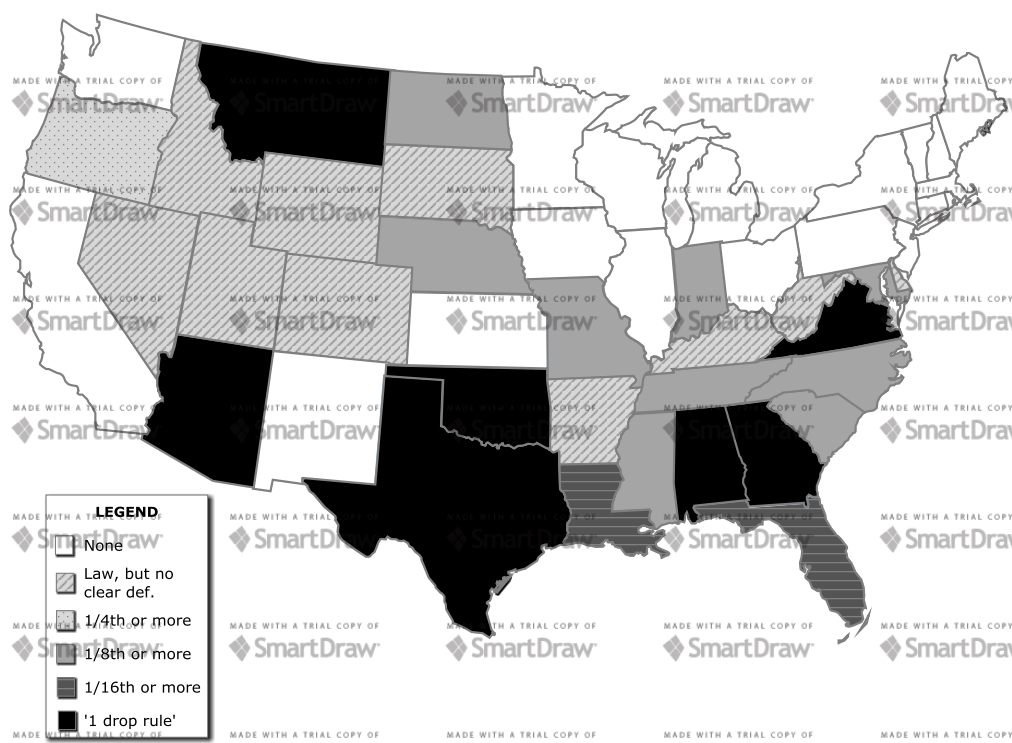
South Carolina went into detail with especially Native Americans: it was the only state to use only the term *Indian* instead of *American Indian*, but it definitely referred to them (instead of Indians from India) since in the law also the term *mestizo* is used, which comes from (Mexican) Spanish meaning mixed race. It is also the only state that used the term *half-breed*, which would indicate that it was not exactly a widely accepted PC term since the other states did not use it in legislature, but it was just PC enough to be in a state law even if only once.

Alabama was surprisingly unclear in its legislation although it is a part of the Deep South since it only defines Negroes to include mulattoes. This can mean two things: (1) people who were less than half black were not (at least legally) defined as black, or (2) all mixed offspring was called *mulattoes* (see section 3.4). Of course, courts could decide in challenged cases.

All in all, the hypodescent system (*i.e.* the one-drop rule, see section 3.4) was in the legislation of at least seven states. Some of them had discrepancies (*e.g.* Texas and Mississippi) in different laws and some of the states had not defined their terms completely. In courts, the one-drop rule

was definitely in use, as well. About eleven states forbade marriage between whites and anybody having less than 1/8<sup>th</sup> of black blood. It would seem then that if people had one black great-grandparent and the rest of them white, they were considered white enough to marry a completely white person in most states. The most liberal states of the 29 allowed marriages between whites and anybody having less than 1/4<sup>th</sup> of black blood. The states with no clear definitions and the ones that had anti-miscegenation laws concerning mulattoes are problematic since mulatto can be two things: half white and half black, or anything between white and black (see section 3.4). There are also a couple of words that catch the eye: *ascertainable* and *appreciable*. *Ascertain* means to ‘learn with certainty’ (random house dictionary) which would indicate towards the one-drop rule, but *appreciable* means ‘distinct or visible’ in which case in Kentucky one could be deemed black only if they looked the part.

In the following figure, the anti-miscegenation laws are shown in a map (see section 4.2.1 for a map with the states mentioned). In some states, I have supplemented the information with racial definition laws when needed. The only state that may surprise is Montana since there was not and still is not a lot of racial diversity within that state. However, they could have just gone according to the ambiance of the time and followed the Southern way. Unsurprisingly, one can see an increasing harshness in the legislation going roughly from the North to the South and from the West to the East since New England and the West are the most liberal areas of the United States to this day.





*Image 5. Anti-miscegenation laws in the United States in the 1950's.*

### 5.2.3 Politically correct racial terminology in the United States in current times

The Jim Crow laws were deemed unconstitutional in 1964 and in laws the most common phrase afterwards, when related to racial issues, has been something like this: ‘regardless of race, color *etc.*’ For example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 “makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex”. (See *app. 7* and section 5.1.3.) In other words, the term *race* is still used, but there are no attempts to separate or define the races.

However, that the legislation is avoiding definitions does not mean that there are no PC definitions. The Census Bureau is still marking down the race of people and also the American health organisations are classifying people. Certain health risks are elevated within minorities whether the cause is cultural and/or genetic. However, some of these classifications seem rather broad and insignificant when health is concerned and some seem to be missing. Hence, one could question the validity of these classifications. The following list depicts the current racial categories of the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and they call them “Racial and Ethnic minority populations”:

- Asian American
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- White
- Multiracial

There are a couple of noteworthy points here. First of all, both terms *racial* and *Ethnic* are used at the same time and are equated which means that Hispanics can be in the same list unlike in the Census of 2010 (see next paragraph). Also, both *black* and *African American* are mentioned as well as both *Hispanic* and *Latino*. This would indicate that these are all considered as PC terms and many have difficulties in choosing between all of these. It is also interesting that *Native American* is missing and instead *American Indian* is used along with *Alaska Native*. This would indicate that *Native American* is possibly seen as somewhat too constructed a term. *White* is simply stated instead of the rather complicated *Caucasian*. *Multiracial* is a rather vague term

since the US is a country of immigrants, but this option has not been available for long. Before, people had to choose between all of their ancestors.

The latest Census taken in the US is Census of 2010. The US Constitution mandates that a census must be taken every 10 years in order to determine the number of seats each state is to receive in the US House of Representatives (Humes *et al.* 2011: 22). In Census 2010, there were two separate questions on race and ethnicity: “Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?” and “What is this person’s race?” I used the term ethnicity because before these two questions, there is a note that states the following: “Please answer BOTH Question 5 (or 8 depending on the source) about Hispanic origin and Question 6 (or 9) about race. For this Census, Hispanic origins are not races.” In fact, although mulattoes formed a separate category between 1850 and 1930, only in 2000 and 2010 Americans were able to tick more than one primary race in the questionnaire. According to Kidd (2006: 11), this is due to the rising multiracial movement urging the government to recognise the fact of inter-racial sexual relationships.

The questions were as follows:

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano

Yes, Puerto Rican

Yes, Cuban

Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — *Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.*

9. What is Person 1’s race? Mark x one or more boxes.

White

Black, African Am., or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.*

Asian Indian

Chinese

Filipino

Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.*

Japanese

Korean

Vietnamese

Native Hawaiian

Guamanian or Chamorro

Samoan

Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.*

Some other race — *Print race.*

It is extremely fascinating why some races are so explicitly stated and some are not. The Hispanic question is also intriguing. Some of these options are more about nationalities and ethnicities than races and some are very specific and some very broad indeed. For example, why is a white person just *white* instead of *Scandinavian* or *German*, for example? All in all, why is race even asked if everybody is tiptoeing around the subject? Obviously, the whole idea of asking one's race is absurd and the reasons behind it questionable, but if it has to be done, why are the questions so vague and inconsistent?

The United States Census Bureau issued a brief on the two questions (Humes *et al.* Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010, issued March 2011). As the report states (*op. cit.* 1-2), the *2010 Census Restricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File* renders data on Hispanic origin and race. In the Census, race combinations were reported with the conjunction *and*. All the answers were based on self-identification. The reason why there were two separate questions on race and Hispanic origin is that the Census was required to collect data on both, but Hispanic origin is not seen as a race since the Census has to follow the guidelines provided by the US office of Management and Budget's (OMB) *1997 Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*. Thus, these federal standards mandate that race and ethnicity (Hispanic origin) are separate and distinct concepts. According to the report (*op. cit.* 3-4), the Hispanic population grew by 43 percent between 2000 and 2010 which makes up more than half of the growth in the total population of the United States during that time. Also, the Asian population grew faster than any other major race group. The overwhelming majority of the total population of the US reported only one race in 2010.

Interestingly, in the question where race was asked, there were fourteen specific races to choose from and underneath the option to choose *some other race*. However, in the report, there were definitions for six races only and also a definition for the Hispanic ethnicity (which would suggest equation). The following are the definitions provided by the report (Humes *et al.* 2011: 2-3) and they are almost identical to the CDC terminology:

Table 4. The present-day politically correct racial terminology in the US.

Race	Definition
White	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa ( <i>e.g.</i> Irish, Lebanese, Caucasian > all interpreted as white).
Black or African American	A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa ( <i>e.g.</i> black, Afr. Am., Negro, Kenyan, or Haitian > all interpreted as black).
American Indian or Alaska Native	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment ( <i>e.g.</i> Am. Indian, Navajo, Inupiat > all interpreted as American Indian or Alaska Native).
Asian	A person having origins in any of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent ( <i>e.g.</i> Asia Indian, Filipino, Japanese, Other Asian > all interpreted as Asian).
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	A person having origin sin any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands ( <i>e.g.</i> Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Other Pacific Islander > all interpreted as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander).
Some Other Race	Includes all other responses not included in the groups above ( <i>e.g.</i> multiracial, mixed, interracial, any Hispanic group, such as Mexican, Cuban > all interpreted as Some Other Race).

Ethnicity	Definition
Hispanic origin (Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably in the report [Humes <i>et al.</i> 2011: 2])	A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

Genetically, of course, Hispanics are white (although this sentence has some loose ends since, as we know, race is not only about skin colour or place of origin, but culture and language). Hence, they cannot be called anything else by race. However, since the US government still

apparently wants information on them, the Hispanics had to be separated ethnically. This, of course, would suggest that although officially and politically they belong to the white race, they are still very much the Other. Also, although they are separated, in the statistics they are counted as a minority just like all the minority races. In other words, in the statistics they are not included in the white race.

The questions themselves are ridiculously structured since they mix merrily not just races and ethnicities, but also nationalities and even tribes (American Indians). It all seems like nobody knows what the politically correct way of discussing race is, so the end result looks rather messy. The questions are at the same time both vague and extremely specific. All in all, if the main reason is to know how many people there are, why is race so important? And especially the Hispanic question? At least the census is nowadays based on self-identification. And one can be multiracial and do not have to choose only one. However, many still chose only one which would indicate that people are accustomed to identify with only one group rather than be a part of multiple groups. Indeed, in-between identities are tricky and may cause problems. For example, the ones who are half black and half white may not be included into either of the groups (*e.g.* you look too white to be black and too black to be white).

The American classification mixes different categories, such as race, ethnicity, nationality, and tribe, but they are all still referring to the same thing: (cultural) race. Hence, I did not find any intersectionality within the American systems. Institutional racism is a given as are euphemisms and orthophemisms along with avoidance strategies in the current classifications.

### 5.3 Summary of the results and discussion

*Table 5.* Summarised results of all of the politically correct racial terminologies found in this study.

	SA	US
1950's	<p>Apartheid legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>native</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>coloured</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>Indian</b></li> <li>-<b>white</b></li> </ul>	<p>Jim Crow legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>Negro</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>white</b></li> <li>-<b>non-white</b></li> <li>-<b>Indian</b></li> <li>-<b>Hindu</b></li> </ul>
ca. 2000's	<p>Current legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>black</b> (<i>i.e.</i> non-white) = <b>African</b></li> <li><b>Coloured</b></li> <li><b>Indian</b></li> <li>(-white, not mentioned)</li> <li>-none mentioned in the Constitution (discrimination prohibited on grounds of race, gender, colour, age, religion, culture, language <i>etc.</i>)</li> </ul>	<p>Current legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-none mentioned (<i>e.g.</i> regardless of race, creed, color, or gender <i>etc.</i>)</li> </ul>
	<p>Census 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>Black African</b></li> <li>(subdivisions by language)</li> <li>-<b>Coloured</b></li> <li>-<b>Indian</b></li> <li>-<b>White</b></li> <li>-<b>Other</b></li> </ul>	<p>Census 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<b>White</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>Black or African American</b></li> <li>(subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b></li> <li>(subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>Asian</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>Some Other Race</b> (subdivisions)</li> <li>-<b>Hispanic Origin</b> (ethnicity; subdivisions)</li> </ul>

Above, there is a very short and somewhat abbreviated compilation of all the results. As can be seen, the terms are the same in neither of the countries nor eras. However, the South African continuum has always been more clear-cut and the categories physically the same even when some terms have been replaced. The only term added is the collective *black* replacing the contentious *non-white* (less contentious in the US, it would seem), and the only category addition is the *other* category which is rather important considering the fact that not everybody can fit the assigned boxes. All in all, I think the South African side is more cohesive and, more to the point, practical.

The US side has been messy and still is. During Jim Crow legislation, different states had very different views and also terms for what they thought of race. Nowadays, there is more consensus, but the categories are still vague and complex. In legislation, the terminology and categorisation dilemma is fixed by circumvention: the terms have been evaded by referring to all of them at the same time without specifying any groups. (This is also true in the South African Constitution, but not in BEE or EE, for example.) However, in census, race is still asked which means that categories are needed even when it is based on self-identification. And, the statistics use the above terminology, but the form itself has different terms altogether and many more options which mix different domains: races, ethnicities, nationalities, *etc.* (e.g. black, Cree, Japanese). Another question deals solely with Hispanic origin which is not considered another race (a fact that is highlighted also in the form), but an ethnicity and a part of the white race. However, in statistics they are counted along with other minorities instead of the whites that form the majority. Hence, they are just as separate according to the statistics as any other minority group, *i.e.* race. This is verbal hygiene at its best: on the surface, the Hispanics are not called a race since that is considered politically incorrect (and, of course, biologically incorrect), but they are still separated just as much as any other minority race in the US. In other words, people still think through race, even though we know it does not exist biologically. We are Othering people according to what I would call their cultural race.

Although the cultural concepts (see section 2.4.2) have some similarities between the two areas and, indeed, the two eras, one can still also see some poignant differences in the categorisations. The main difference is how the in-between people have been perceived. However, since political correctness has its paws in the mix, the differences can look bigger than what they actually would be since nobody really knows what the preferred terms are and have been. In any case, racial terminologies show some of the conceptualised differences between two

different cultures using the same language which proves my main hypothesis. Also, the South African terminologies are simpler and more practical than the American ones. However, the South African terminologies have been influenced by political correctness slightly more than I would have anticipated. The American ones, on the other hand, are even more immersed in political correctness than I thought.

In short, the racial terminologies are inherently confusing and complex. They are a mixture of history, political correctness, politeness, racism, and arbitrariness. The only constant feature is change which is appropriate in the context of language and, indeed, life. However, the change is rapid, constant, redundant, and somewhat useless, since the underlying attitudes shift slowly; much more slowly than the terms themselves. Of course, this can be looked at another direction: if we change terms, the attitudes may follow the change more rapidly than they would without a change since the attitudes are made visible and discussed. Hence, the progress may seem futile and often it probably is, but maybe it has also helped the situation. Then again, one might ask whether the terminologies (especially the American ones) have gone too far and rightly so. I doubt many benefit from lengthy and vague euphemisms no matter what the intention was behind them. However, the clear-cut alternative can be very strict, over-simplifying and dangerous even given its possibilities of exploitation (*e.g.* apartheid, quotas). Of course, the mere existence of racial classifications should be questioned, but **as long as we think through race, I think we should also be brave enough to talk about it frankly**. And for that we need terminology. However, no matter what the preferred and politically correct terminology is at any given time, race and anything involved with it creates a minefield of political correctness, or more often incorrectness, because nothing is simple and correct when it comes to race.



## 6. Conclusion

*Always use the proper name for things. Fear of a name increases fear of the thing itself.*

Professor Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

(Rowling 1997: 216).

Racial terminologies provide fruitful data for a study about political correctness since race is a highly complex topic. In order to explore the scene as meaningfully as possible, some interdisciplinary information has been utilised. The epigraphs are there to give additional points of view to give an idea of the enormity of the subject. Political correctness straddles the fine line between prescription and description, but falls more heavily on the prescriptive side usually.

There are some clear distinctions between both the two areas and the two eras. The cultures have dealt with race somewhat differently: In South Africa, people relate to race quite practically and simplistically which leads to practical terminologies. In the US, on the other hand, race is and has been a difficult topic to discuss, and yet has been seen as a topic worth maintaining. This leads to confusing and messy terminologies and troubles when they are used. There are also some outdated terms in both areas. However, the most outdated ones are always referring to blacks, mainly *native* and *negro*. In both countries there are also tendencies to eliminate specific race categorisations by avoiding the terms altogether (*e.g.* Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Constitution of South Africa). However, both of the countries also take censuses every ten years where race is asked explicitly. Thus, the PC terminologies are still needed. There are some valid reasons for taking the censuses, such as the voting registers and they can be used to know the vitality of languages, for example. However, it is questionable that race is used as a means of categorisation when biologically races do not exist and institutional racism is illegal in both countries. In South Africa, at least, the questions are about politically correct populations and languages (although both race and ethnicity can be found implicitly via these questions), but in the US, there are two clear (and yet messy) race questions although the Hispanics are categorised as an ethnic group. The statistics treat the Hispanics as one of the other nonwhite races. Why are we still discussing race? Is it that important? On the other hand, if it is found so important, at least people should have the courage to discuss it frankly. The South Africans seem to be a bit more accomplished in this, but, all in all, these two countries are both highly concerned with race and, most likely, continue to be. Thus, the racial terminologies are needed and they will undoubtedly continue to change rapidly in the future, as well.

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(And Stetson Kennedy's book.)

## Appendice

### *Appendix 1. The Finnish race.*

The earlier pseudo-scientific race beliefs maintained their position in anthropology for a long time and disappeared slowly. In unscientific race concepts and racist doctrines they remained longer, according to Kemiläinen (1998: 213). In reality, one can see the theories in use in modern racism.

As Kemiläinen (1998: 75-76) explains, Finno-Ugrians were confirmed to be originally Asian and had a Mongolian appearance. In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were Europeans travelling in Finland in search of these Mongolians' ancestors but to their astonishment found blondes who looked more European than Mongolian. A Finnish man was said to have slanting eyes and prominent cheekbones (Heikkilä, Marja, *Pohjoisen yön äärellä: Toisten Suomi*, 272-273, cited in Kemiläinen 1998: 76, 80). Finns were also described as dark and small. We were described as Other. However, thanks to this theory, Turks, Japanese, and Mongolians consider us often as relatives and, hence, often welcome us.

From the British view, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Halmesvirta (1990: 167, 169) states, Finns' place in anthropological theory was indeterminate. Finns were rarely seen as Western and European, and more often seen as of Russian descent. In fact, Finns were seen as intruders since we had managed to become a part (at least somewhat) of the Western civilization. Finns were between the whites and the yellows (Mongolian) and the demarcation line had to be crossed and obscured. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1859, s.v. 'Ethnology', 'Finland', cited in Halmesvirta 1990: 169) claims Finns to have a Mongol physiognomy when we are compared to Germans but to have a more European physiognomy when compared to the actual Mongols. Apparently, Finns had taken their fair complexion and blue eyes from the whites, but still persisted to have a flat face like a Mongol. At this point, culture comes into play; certain qualities (unspecified), dress, and a primitive method of clearing the forests indicated barbarism rather than civilisation.

Some Brits, according to Halmesvirta (1990: 178-179), were very concerned over the consequences of a Finnish mixture in the Aryan race: The Celts could have been in contact with "the broadheaded Finns", and, since some Swedish nationalist anthropologists had proven that

the Aryans had resided in the Baltic area where the original Finns had been, as well, another contact possibility existed. This was frightening since Finns had supposedly been slaves of the Aryans (later the Nordic) and, hence, there was a possibility of degeneration of other European Aryans.

Nazis began their quest for the pure Aryan race before the Second World War. The concentration camps took this race hygiene into an extreme: genocide. Kemiläinen (1998: 213-215) explains how the Nazis originally considered Aryans to consist of the 'Germanic race' only. As Finns were seen as Mongols (and, as such, members of the Asiatic race), we were inferior to Europeans. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, though, Finns were seen as a mixture of Mongolians and Europeans. This view was assisted with our Swedish-speaking population. Hence, we became a part of the East Baltic race. Russians were considered to be ancient Finno-Ugrians, *i.e.* East Baltic, too. However, every member of the East Baltic race was seen to belong to a lower class of society.

The problem that the Germans had was that all Germans were not that "Aryan", so the concept had to be widened a little bit; to consist of the Indo-European populations. Hence, according to Kemiläinen (1998: 217), also the East Baltic race came to be included in the Aryan race in the more or less official theory of the 1930's. The German soldiers that were placed in Finland were given some favourable information on the Finns, but, at the same time, the Germans tried to prevent the Germans' relations and marriages with Finnish women. To Russians, as Kemiläinen (1998: 218) states, Finns were Uralians. By the Central Europeans, Russians were regarded as foreign (Other), and, hence, Finns tried to be identified with Europe.

According to Stetson Kennedy (1959: 46), in 1958, William Heikkila was kidnapped and deported by the US immigration bureau agents. He was brought to the States as an infant and had been fighting deportation in courts. He admitted that he had been a member of the Communist party in the early 1930's, during the Great Depression, but that he had not been affiliated with them since. As can be seen from this incident, Finns could be deemed nonwhite because of their political stance.

Appendix 2. The rest of the etiquette of the 1950's.

1. One may not partake of food with a person of the other race and whites are to be served first. A nursemaid, however, is allowed to eat an ice-cream cone with the white child they are taking care of provided that the refreshments are taken with you. Drinking water is prohibited unless from a paper cup. Men are allowed to share alcohol with other races and smoke together, but women are not. (Note: nonwhite men should not offer light to a white woman; seen as an intimate gesture.)
2. White men are allowed (even rather openly) to have sexual intercourse with nonwhite women just as long as it is merely concubinage. (Note: nonwhite women have virtually no protection against rape by white men.) Sexual intercourse between white women and nonwhite men cannot even be discussed in white circles. This extends to prostitution. Nonwhites are not allowed to show any affection in public whereas whites are.
3. Nonwhite men need to avoid white women at all times.
4. Interracial introductions: nonwhites should always be introduced to whites, not *vice versa*.
5. Interracial hand-shaking is taboo.
6. Interracial speaking has been gradually withdrawn and hence this may have led to literal muteness in some cases.
7. Interracial addressing: whites should *never* say "Mr.", "Mrs.", "sir", or "Ma'am" to nonwhites, but always use their first name. Nonwhites should *always* say "Mr.", "Mrs.", "sir", or "Ma'am" to whites and never call them by their first names. Nursemaids are to call the children as Mr. Bob, or Miss. Jean, for example, as soon as they reach puberty. If a nonwhite person does not know the name of a white person and is forced to address them, they should be called *Bossman*, *Captain* or some other title of respect. When there are many whites, the correct plural is *white-folks*. Nonwhites are frequently called *boys* and *girls* regardless of age or class unless they are gray-haired in which case the terms would be *uncle* or *auntie*. The correct ways of addressing apply to telephone conversations and written correspondence, as well. The maid must call the caller a "Mr." or a "Mrs." to reveal her identity and in letters, when writing to a nonwhite person, the letter should start with the name only and lacking *dear*.
8. In conversations, the white usually takes the lead and it is wise to let them do that. One should always bear in mind while conversing that whites are superior and nonwhites are inferior and everything should be fine.



9. Things a nonwhite cannot say or even suggest: Never suggest that a white person is lying. Never accuse whites of dishonourable intentions. Never suggest that the white person is of an inferior class. Never show superior knowledge. Never curse a white person. Never laugh at a white person. Never compliment the physical attractiveness of a white person of the opposite sex.
10. Talking back is ill-advised, but if it has to be done, the acceptable method is to ask a non-belligerent question, such as: "Do you think that's the right way to do it?" Also, sometimes a complaint can be heard when it is put into a song.
11. Do not enter a white house through the front door as a nonwhite. In contrast, whites can walk through nonwhites houses' front doors whenever and how ever they want. Interracial social calls are unthinkable.
12. Nonwhite cannot sit in a parlour of a white house. Also the servants are expected to sit in the kitchen and in their own quarters. Whites, on the other hand, can sit wherever and whenever in a nonwhite home without an invitation. In cars, nonwhites are expected to sit in the back.
13. Nonwhites are required to remove their hat when talking to a white person regardless of sex. Evasive tactics: to remove the hat before-hand to eliminate the significance of the gesture. If the conversation is a surprise, the nonwhite can pretend to wipe his brow and remove the hat because of that. The ultimate solution is to not wear a hat as a nonwhite man. There are also places where a white man can wear a hat, but a nonwhite man cannot (*e.g.* hotel lobbies, office buildings). White men are also expected to wear hats inside a nonwhite home.
14. On the road, nonwhites are expected to slow down or stop when a car driven by a white person approaches since the whites always have the right-of-way. The same applies on foot: white people are given way, nonwhite people are not.
15. Most business establishments are segregated, too. In white stores, nonwhites may not be served or are served last and might not allow nonwhites to try on hats *etc.* Also, in such matters as voting and public health services, nonwhites are supposed to form their own queues and to be served after whites.
16. Before the Civil War, Negroes had a curfew. Those laws have disappeared in most places, but in Florida there are some cities where Negroes are required to keep off the streets by 8 pm. Although this is not a law in most places, it is safer for nonwhites to stay inside during nights since police officers think that nonwhites are more criminally-

inclined than whites. There can also be mobs. It can be hazardous to venture outside at night as a Hispanic, too, in the big cities of the West (*e.g.* Los Angeles).

Appendix 3. The Population Registration Act of 1950; definitions.

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Act No. 30  
of 1950.

## ACT

To make provision for the compilation of a Register of the Population of the Union;  
for the issue of Identity Cards to persons whose names are included in the  
Register; and for matters incidental thereto.

*(Afrikaans Text signed by the Officer Administering the Government.)  
(Assented to 22nd June, 1950.)*

**BE IT ENACTED** by the King's Most Excellent Majesty,  
the Senate and the House of Assembly of the Union of  
South Africa, as follows :—

1. In this Act, unless the context otherwise indicates— Definitions.
- (i) "alien" means an alien as defined in section *one* of the  
Aliens Act, 1937 (Act No. 1 of 1937); (xv)
-

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- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) "board" means a board constituted in terms of section <i>eleven</i>; (x)</li> <li>(iii) "coloured person" means a person who is not a white person or a native; (iv)</li> <li>(iv) "Director" means the Director of Census appointed under section <i>four</i> of the Census Act, 1910 (Act No. 2 of 1910), and includes the Assistant Director of Census and any officer acting under a delegation from or under the control or direction of the Director; (ii)</li> <li>(v) "ethnic or other group" means a group prescribed and defined by the Governor-General in terms of subsection (2) of section <i>five</i>; (iii)</li> <li>(vi) "fixed date" means the date upon which the census is taken in the year 1951 in terms of section <i>three</i> of the Census Act, 1910 (Act No. 2 of 1910); (xiii)</li> <li>(vii) "identity card" means the identity card referred to in section <i>thirteen</i> but does not include an identity card which has lapsed in terms of any regulation; (viii)</li> <li>(viii) "identity number" means the identity number assigned to a person in terms of section <i>six</i>; (ix)</li> <li>(ix) "Minister" means the Minister of the Interior; (vi)</li> <li>(x) "native" means a person who in fact is or is generally accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa; (vii)</li> <li>(xi) "prescribed" means prescribed by regulation; (xiv)</li> <li>(xii) "register" means the register referred to in section <i>two</i>; (xi)</li> <li>(xiii) "regulation" means a regulation made under section <i>tw. nty</i>; (xii)</li> <li>(xiv) "this Act" includes the regulations; (v)</li> <li>(xv) "white person" means a person who in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, but does not include a person who, although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person. (i)</li> </ul> | <p>Act No. 30<br/>of 1950.</p> |
|--|--------------------------------|
- 
2. There shall, as soon as practicable after the fixed date, be compiled by the Director and thereafter maintained by him, a register of the population of the Union.
- Compilation and maintenance of population register.
3. The particulars required for the compilation of the register in respect of the population of the Union as at the fixed date shall be extracted by the Director from the forms and returns received by him under the Census Act, 1910 (Act No. 2 of 1910), in connection with the census taken on the fixed date and from such other records as may be available to the Director.
- Data from which register to be compiled.
4. There shall be included in the register, in three separate parts thereof, the names of—
- What persons to be included in the register.
- (a) (i) all South African citizens within the Union on the fixed date;
  - (ii) all South African citizens who enter or are born in the Union after the fixed date; and
  - (iii) all persons who become South African citizens in the Union after the fixed date;
-

- (ii) "board" means a board constituted in terms of section *eleven*; (x) Act No. 30 of 1950.
- (iii) "coloured person" means a person who is not a white person or a native; (iv)
- (iv) "Director" means the Director of Census appointed under section *four* of the Census Act, 1910 (Act No. 2 of 1910), and includes the Assistant Director of Census and any officer acting under a delegation from or under the control or direction of the Director; (ii)
- (v) "ethnic or other group" means a group prescribed and defined by the Governor-General in terms of subsection (2) of section *five*; (iii)
- (vi) "fixed date" means the date upon which the census is taken in the year 1951 in terms of section *three* of the Census Act, 1910 (Act No. 2 of 1910); (xiii)
- (vii) "identity card" means the identity card referred to in section *thirteen* but does not include an identity card which has lapsed in terms of any regulation; (viii)
- (viii) "identity number" means the identity number assigned to a person in terms of section *six*; (ix)
- (ix) "Minister" means the Minister of the Interior; (vi)
- (x) "native" means a person who in fact is or is generally accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa; (vii)
- (xi) "prescribed" means prescribed by regulation; (xiv)
- (xii) "register" means the register referred to in section *two*; (xi)
- (xiii) "regulation" means a regulation made under section *two*; (xii)
- (xiv) "this Act" includes the regulations; (v)
- (xv) "white person" means a person who in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, but does not include a person who, although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person. (i)

2. There shall, as soon as practicable after the fixed date, be compiled by the Director and thereafter maintained by him, a register of the population of the Union.

Compilation and maintenance of population register.

3. The particulars required for the compilation of the register in respect of the population of the Union as at the fixed date shall be extracted by the Director from the forms and returns received by him under the Census Act, 1910 (Act No. 2 of 1910), in connection with the census taken on the fixed date and from such other records as may be available to the Director.

Data from which register to be compiled.

## Appendix 4. Employment Equity Act of 1998; the beginning and definitions.

Downloaded from <http://www.labour.gov.za>



Department of Labour

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### Employment Equity Act, No. 55 Of 1998

#### ACT

To provide for employment equity; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.

#### Recognising-

- Σ that as a result of apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices, there are disparities in employment, occupation and income within the national labour market; and
- Σ that those disparities create such pronounced disadvantages for certain categories of people that they cannot be redressed simply by repealing discriminatory laws,

#### Therefore, in order to-

- Σ promote the constitutional right of equality and the exercise of true democracy;
- Σ eliminate unfair discrimination in employment;
- Σ ensure the implementation of employment equity to redress the effects of discrimination;
- Σ achieve a diverse workforce broadly representative of our people;
- Σ promote economic development and efficiency in the workforce; and
- Σ give effect to the obligations of the Republic as a member of the International Labour Organisation,

BE IT ENACTED by the State President and the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, as follows:-



Department of Labour

## CHAPTER 1

### Definitions, purpose, interpretation and application

#### 1. Definitions

In this Act, unless the context otherwise indicates-

**"Basic Conditions of Employment Act"** means the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997);

**"black people"** is a generic term which means Africans, Coloureds and Indians;

**"CCMA"** means the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, established by section 112 of the Labour Relations Act;

**"code of good practice"** means a document issued by the Minister in terms of section 54;

**"collective agreement"** means a written agreement concerning terms and conditions of employment or any other matter of mutual interest concluded by one or more registered trade unions, on the one hand and, on the other hand-

- (a) one or more employers;
- (b) one or more registered employers' organisations; or
- (c) one or more employers and one or more registered employers' organisations;

**"Commission"** means the Commission for Employment Equity, established by section 28;

**"Constitution"** means the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996);

**"designated employer"** means-

- (a) a person who employs 50 or more employees;
- (b) a person who employs fewer than 50 employees but has a total annual turnover that is equal to or above the applicable annual turnover of a small business in terms of the Schedule 4 of this Act;
- (c) a municipality, as referred to in Chapter 7 of the Constitution;
- (d) an organ of state as defined in section 239 of the Constitution, but excluding local spheres of government, the National Defence Force, the National Intelligence Agency and the South African Secret Service; and
- (e) an employer bound by collective agreement in terms of section 23 or 31 of the Labour Relations Act, which appoints it as a designated employer in terms of this Act, to the extent provided for in the agreement.

**"designated groups"** means black people, women and people with disabilities;

**"Director-General"** means the Director-General of the Department of Labour;

**"dismissal"** has the meaning assigned to it in section 186 of the Labour Relations Act;

**"dispute"** includes an alleged dispute;

**"employee"** means any person other than an independent contractor who-

- (a) works for another person or for the State and who receives, or is entitled to receive, any remuneration; and
- (b) in any manner assists in carrying on or conducting the business of an employer,

and **"employed"** and **"employment"** have corresponding meanings;



Department of Labour

**"employment law"** means any provision of this Act or any of the following Acts:

- (a) The Unemployment Insurance Act, 1966 (Act No. 30 of 1966);
- (b) the Guidance and Placement Act, 1981 (Act No. 62 of 1981);
- (c) the Manpower Training Act, 1981 (Act No. 56 of 1981);
- (d) the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act No. 85 of 1993);
- (e) the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act No. 130 of 1993);
- (f) the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);
- (g) the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act No. 75 of 1997);
- (h) any other Act, whose administration has been assigned to the Minister.

**"employment policy or practice"** includes, but is not limited to-

- (a) recruitment procedures, advertising and selection criteria;
- (b) appointments and the appointment process;
- (c) job classification and grading;
- (d) remuneration, employment benefits and terms and conditions of employment;
- (e) job assignments;
- (f) the working environment and facilities;
- (g) training and development;
- (h) performance evaluation systems;
- (i) promotion;
- (j) transfer;
- (k) demotion;
- (l) disciplinary measures other than dismissal; and
- (m) dismissal.

**"family responsibility"** means the responsibility of employees in relation to their spouse or partner, their dependant children or other members of their immediate family who need their care or support;

**"HIV"** means the Human Immunodeficiency Virus;

**"labour inspector"** means a person appointed in terms of section 65 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act;

**"Labour Relations Act"** means the Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act No. 66 of 1995);

**"medical testing"** includes any test, question, inquiry or other means designed to ascertain, or which has the effect of enabling the employer to ascertain, whether an employee has any medical condition;

**"Minister"** means the Minister of Labour;

**"NEDLAC"** means the National Economic, Development and Labour Council established by section 2 of the National Economic, Development and Labour Council Act, 1994 (Act No. 35 of 1994);

**"organ of state"** means an organ of state as defined in section 239 of the Constitution;





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**"people with disabilities"** means people who have a long-term or recurring physical or mental impairment which substantially limits their prospects of entry into, or advancement in, employment;

**"pregnancy"** includes intended pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and any medical circumstances related to pregnancy;

**"prescribed"** means prescribed by a regulation made under section 55;

**"public service"** means the public service referred to in section 1 (1) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (promulgated by Proclamation No. 103 of 1994), and includes any organisational component contemplated in section 7 (4) of that Act and specified in the first column of Schedule 2 to that Act, but excluding-

- (a) the National Defence Force;
- (b) the National Intelligence Agency; and
- (c) the South African Secret Service.

**"reasonable accommodation"** means any modification or adjustment to a job or to the working environment that will enable a person from a designated group to have access to or participate or advance in employment;

**"registered employers' organisation"** means an employers' organisation as defined in section 213 of the Labour Relations Act and registered in terms of section 96 of that Act;

**"registered trade union"** means a trade union as defined in section 213 of the Labour Relations Act and registered in terms of section 96 of that Act;

**"remuneration"** means any payment in money or in kind, or both in money and in kind, made or owing to any person in return for that person working for any other person, including the State;

**"representative trade union"** means a registered trade union, or two or more registered trade unions acting jointly, that are sufficiently representative of the employees employed by an employer in a workplace;

**"Republic"** means the Republic of South Africa as defined in the Constitution;

**"serve"** or **"submit"**, in relation to any communication, means either-

- (a) to send it in writing delivered by hand or registered post; or
- (b) to transmit it using any electronic mechanism as a result of which the recipient is capable of printing the communication;

**"suitably qualified person"** means a person contemplated in sections 20 (3) and (4);

**"this Act"** includes any regulations made under section 55, but excludes any footnote;

**"trade union representative"** means a member of a registered trade union who is elected to represent employees in a workplace;

**"workplace forum"** means a workplace forum established in terms of Chapter V of the Labour Relations Act.

## 2. Purpose of this Act

The purpose of this Act is to achieve equity in the workplace by-

- (a) promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination; and
- (b) implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups, in order to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce.

Appendix 5. Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003; the beginning and definitions.

2 No. 25899

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, 9 JANUARY 2004

Act No. 53, 2003

BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC  
EMPOWERMENT ACT, 2003

*(English text signed by the President.)  
(Assented to 7 January 2004.)*

## ACT

To establish a legislative framework for the promotion of black economic empowerment; to empower the Minister to issue codes of good practice and to publish transformation charters; to establish the Black Economic Empowerment Advisory Council; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

### PREAMBLE

**WHEREAS** under apartheid race was used to control access to South Africa's productive resources and access to skills;

**WHEREAS** South Africa's economy still excludes the vast majority of its people from ownership of productive assets and the possession of advanced skills;

**WHEREAS** South Africa's economy performs below its potential because of the low level of income earned and generated by the majority of its people;

**AND WHEREAS**, unless further steps are taken to increase the effective participation of the majority of South Africans in the economy, the stability and prosperity of the economy in the future may be undermined to the detriment of all South Africans, irrespective of race;

### AND IN ORDER TO—

- promote the achievement of the constitutional right to equality, increase broad-based and effective participation of black people in the economy and promote a higher growth rate, increased employment and more equitable income distribution; and
- establish a national policy on broad-based black economic empowerment so as to promote the economic unity of the nation, protect the common market, and promote equal opportunity and equal access to government services.

**BE IT ENACTED** by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, as follows:—

### ARRANGEMENT OF ACT

#### Sections

1.	Definitions	5
2.	Objectives of Act	
3.	Interpretation of Act	
4.	Establishment of Black Economic Empowerment Advisory Council	
5.	Functions of Council	
6.	Composition of Council and appointment of members	10
7.	Constitution and rules of Council	
8.	Remuneration and reimbursement of expenses	
9.	Codes of good practice	

## Act No. 53, 2003

BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC  
EMPOWERMENT ACT, 2003

10. Status of codes of good practice
11. Strategy for broad-based black economic empowerment
12. Transformation charters
13. Support services and funding of Council
14. Regulations 5
15. Short title and commencement

## Definitions

1. In this Act, unless the context indicates otherwise—
  - “black people” is a generic term which means Africans, Coloureds and Indians;
  - “broad-based black economic empowerment” means the economic empowerment of all black people including women, workers, youth, people with disabilities and people living in rural areas through diverse but integrated socio-economic strategies that include, but are not limited to—
    - (a) increasing the number of black people that manage, own and control enterprises and productive assets; 15
    - (b) facilitating ownership and management of enterprises and productive assets by communities, workers, cooperatives and other collective enterprises;
    - (c) human resource and skills development;
    - (d) achieving equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce; 20
    - (e) preferential procurement; and
    - (f) investment in enterprises that are owned or managed by black people;
  - “Council” means the Black Economic Empowerment Advisory Council established by section 4; 25
  - “members” means members of the Council;
  - “Minister” means the Minister of Trade and Industry;
  - “organ of state” means—
    - (a) a national or provincial department as defined in the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999); 30
    - (b) a municipality as contemplated in the Constitution;
    - (c) Parliament;
    - (d) a provincial legislature; and
    - (e) a constitutional institution listed in Schedule 1 to the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999); 35
  - “prescribe” means prescribe by regulation;
  - “public entity” means a public entity listed in Schedule 2 or 3 to the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act No. 1 of 1999);
  - “strategy” means a strategy for broad-based black economic empowerment issued in terms of section 11; and 40
  - “this Act” includes any code of good practice or regulation made under this Act.

## Objectives of Act

2. The objectives of this Act are to facilitate broad-based black economic empowerment by—
  - (a) promoting economic transformation in order to enable meaningful participation of black people in the economy; 45
  - (b) achieving a substantial change in the racial composition of ownership and management structures and in the skilled occupations of existing and new enterprises;
  - (c) increasing the extent to which communities, workers, cooperatives and other collective enterprises own and manage existing and new enterprises and increasing their access to economic activities, infrastructure and skills training; 50

**Preamble**

We, the people of South Africa,

Recognise the injustices of our past;

Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;

Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and

Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to-

Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;

Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;

Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and

Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.

God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.

Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.

## **6 Languages**

(1) The official languages of the Republic are Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.

(2) Recognising the historically diminished use and status of the indigenous languages of our people, the state must take practical and positive measures to elevate the status and advance the use of these languages.

(3) (a) The national government and provincial governments may use any particular official languages for the purposes of government, taking into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in the province concerned; but the national government and each provincial government must use at least two official languages.

(b) Municipalities must take into account the language usage and preferences of their residents.

(4) The national government and provincial governments, by legislative and other measures, must regulate and monitor their use of official languages. Without detracting from the provisions of subsection (2), all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably.

(5) A Pan South African Language Board established by national legislation must-

(a) promote, and create conditions for, the development and use of-

- (i) all official languages;
- (ii) the Khoi, Nama and San languages; and
- (iii) sign language; and

(b) promote and ensure respect for-

- (i) all languages commonly used by communities in South Africa, including German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu; and
- (ii) Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit and other languages used for religious purposes in South Africa.

## **9 Equality**

(1) Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.

(2) Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.

(3) The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

(4) No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of subsection (3). National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination.

(5) Discrimination on one or more of the grounds listed in subsection (3) is unfair unless it is established that the discrimination is fair.

## UNLAWFUL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

SEC. 2000e-2. [Section 703]

(a) Employer practices

It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer -

(1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or

(2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

(b) Employment agency practices

It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employment agency to fail or refuse to refer for employment, or otherwise to discriminate against, any individual because of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or to classify or refer for employment any individual on the basis of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

(c) Labor organization practices

It shall be an unlawful employment practice for a labor organization-

(1) to exclude or to expel from its membership, or otherwise to discriminate against, any individual because of his race, color, religion, sex, or national origin;

(2) to limit, segregate, or classify its membership or applicants for membership, or to classify or fail or refuse to refer for employment any individual, in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities, or would limit such employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee or as an applicant for employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or

(3) to cause or attempt to cause an employer to discriminate against an individual in violation of this section.



Appendix 8. Full data of the Jim Crow laws used by state (boldness added).

State	Racial definitions	Who may marry whom
Alabama	' <b>negro</b> ' includes ' <b>mulatto</b> '	Any marriage between any <b>white</b> person and a <b>negro</b> , or a descendant of a <b>negro</b> . A <b>Creole</b> case went to court.
Arizona	<b>Negro</b> is anyone having any <b>Negro</b> blood whatever. Other races mentioned: <b>American Indians, Mongolians, Hindus, Malays.</b>	Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having any <b>Negro</b> blood whatever, or between <b>whites</b> and <b>Hindus</b> .
Arkansas	1. Persons with visible and distinct <b>African</b> blood shall be deemed to belong to the <b>white</b> race. (Anti-miscegenation law) 2. Any person who has in his or her veins any <b>negro</b> blood whatever. (Anti-concubinage law)	A person having any <b>Negro</b> blood may not engage in concubinage with a <b>white</b> , but may marry a <b>white</b> provided the <b>Negro</b> blood is not "visible and distinct". In divorce law: "if other than <b>Caucasian</b> ".
Colorado	<b>Negroes; Mulattoes</b> (no definitions)	Prohibits marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, mulattoes</b> .
Delaware	<b>Negroes; Mulattoes</b> (no definitions)	Prohibits marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, mulattoes</b> .
Florida	1. 1/16 <sup>th</sup> <b>Negro</b> blood (State constitution) 2. 1/8 or more <b>Negro</b> blood (Anti-miscegenation law)	Prohibits marriage between whites and anyone having 1/16 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood. Prohibits cohabitation between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood. (Any <b>white</b> woman who has sexual relations with a <b>Negro</b> man shall be fined 1,000 dollars: no penalty provided for white men who have sexual relations with <b>Negro</b> women.)
Georgia	' <b>white</b> peron': persons of white or <b>Caucasian</b> race, who have no ascertainable trace of either <b>Negro, African, West Indian</b> (anybody from there, race did not matter), <b>Asiatic Indian, Mongolian, Japanese, or Chinese</b> blood in their veins.	1. Prohibits marriage between whites and anyone having any "ascertainable trace of either <b>Negro, African, West Indian, Asiatic Indian, Mongolian, Japanese, or Chinese</b> blood in their veins. (State Constitution)

		<p>2. Any <b>white</b> person to marry anyone except a <b>white</b> person. (Acts of 1927)</p> <p>3. Ordained <b>colored</b> ministers of the Gospel may wed persons of <b>African</b> descent only.</p> <p>4. "Any charge against a white female of having sexual intercourse with a <b>person of color</b> is slanderous without proof of special damage."</p>
Idaho	<b>Negroes; Mulattoes; Mongolians</b> (no definitions)	Prohibits marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, mulattoes, Mongolians.</b>
Indiana	1/8 or more <b>Negro</b> blood	Marriages between a <b>white</b> person and a person with 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood are void.
Kentucky	<p>1. 1/4 or more <b>Negro</b> blood (early anti-miscegenation court ruling)</p> <p>2. Anyone having an "appreciable" amount of <b>Negro</b> blood (Court decision of 1911 imposing school segregation on a person with 1/16<sup>th</sup> <b>Negro</b> blood)</p>	Forbids marriage between whites and <b>Negroes, mulattoes.</b>
Louisiana	<p>1. All "<b>persons of color</b>"</p> <p>2. 1/16<sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood (court)</p> <p>3. <b>Negro</b>: 3/4<sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood</p> <p><b>Griffe</b>: 1/2 <b>Negro</b>, 1/2 <b>mulatto</b></p> <p><b>Mulatto</b>: 1/2 <b>Negro</b>, 1/2 <b>white</b></p> <p><b>Quadroon</b>: 1/4 <b>Negro</b>, 3/4 <b>white</b></p> <p><b>Octoroon</b>: 1/8 <b>Negro</b>, 7/8 <b>white</b> (court)</p>	Forbids sexual intercourse, cohabitation, concubinage, and marriage between <b>whites</b> and all <b>persons of color</b> (1/16 <sup>th</sup> or more). Forbids such relationships between <b>American Indians</b> and <b>Negroes.</b>
Maryland	1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood; <b>Malays</b>	<p>Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8<sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood; <b>Malays.</b> Forbids marriage between <b>Negroes</b> and <b>Malays.</b></p> <p>(A <b>white</b> woman (but not a <b>nonwhite</b> woman) is required to state the name of the father of any illegitimate child she may bear,</p>



		regardless of the <b>race</b> of the child.)
Mississippi	1.1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood (Anti-miscegenation law) 2.any “appreciable” <b>Negro</b> blood (court ruling on school segregation) 3.1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Mongolian</b> blood	1.Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> or <b>Mongolian</b> blood. 2.Cohabitation forbidden between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood (no mention of <b>Mongolians</b> ). 3.Inheritance laws give <b>white</b> descendants precedence over all descendants of <b>mixed blood</b> .
Missouri		Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood; <b>Mongolians</b>
Montana		Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having any <b>Negro</b> blood whatever; <b>Mongolians</b> .
Nebraska		Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> or <b>Mongolian</b> blood.
Nevada	No definitions.	Forbids fornication, adultery, or marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, Mongolians, Malays, American Indians</b>
North Carolina		1.Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> or 2. <b>American Indian</b> blood. <b>American Indians</b> are prohibited to marry anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood.
North Dakota		Forbids fornication, cohabitation, adultery, and marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> or <b>Mongolian</b> blood.
Oklahoma		Forbids marriage between anyone of “ <b>African descent</b> ” and <b>whites, American Indians</b> .
Oregon		Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and anyone having a.1/4 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood

		b. 1/4 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Chinese</b> blood c. 1/4 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Kanaka (Malay)</b> blood d. 1/2 or more <b>American Indian</b> blood.
South Carolina	Court rulings: a <b>coloured</b> person defined as anyone having 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more <b>Negro</b> blood.	1. Prohibits marriage between a <b>white</b> man and any woman of either <b>Indian</b> or <b>negro</b> races, or any <b>mulatto</b> , <b>mestizo</b> , or <b>half-breed</b> . 2. Prohibits marriage between a <b>white</b> woman and any person other than a <b>white</b> man, or for any <b>mulatto</b> , <b>half-breed</b> , <b>Indian</b> , <b>negro</b> or <b>mestizo</b> . (State Constitution) 3. The adoption of a <b>white</b> child by a <b>negro</b> is expressly prohibited.
South Dakota	No definitions	Forbids sexual intercourse and marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, Mongolians, Malays</b> .
Tennessee		Prohibits sexual intercourse, adultery, cohabitation and marriage between a <b>white</b> person and <b>negroes, mulattoes, or persons of mixed blood</b> descended from a <b>negro</b> , to the third generation inclusive (1/8 <sup>th</sup> ).
Texas	Discrepancy in definitions	1. Prohibits marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>negroes</b> . (All interracial marriages involving any <b>Negro</b> blood are void in Texas, but the parties may not be punished unless the admixture of <b>Negro</b> blood is 1/8 <sup>th</sup> or more.) 2. No adoptions across the <b>Negro</b> and <b>white</b> racial line.
Utah	No definitions	Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, Mongolians</b>
Virginia	Discrepancies in definitions	1. Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and a. anyone having any ascertainable <b>Negro</b> blood

		<p>b.anyone having more than 1/16<sup>th</sup> <b>American Indian</b> blood</p> <p>c.<b>Mongolians</b></p> <p>d.<b>Asiatic Indians</b></p> <p>e.<b>Malays.</b></p> <p>2.<b>White</b> for the purpose of this Act applies only to the person who has no trace whatsoever of any blood other than <b>Caucasian</b>. However, persons who have 1/16<sup>th</sup> or less of the blood of the <b>American Indian</b> and have no other <b>non-Caucasian</b> blood shall be deemed to be <b>white</b> persons.</p> <p>3.Due to discrepancies in definitions, all forbidden <b>interracial</b> marriages are void whenever any ascertainable <b>Negro</b> blood is involved, but they cannot be punished unless the admixture of <b>Negro</b> blood is 1/4<sup>th</sup> or more.</p> <p>4.Registration: The racial composition has to be registered as <b>Caucasian, Negro, Mongolian, American Indian, Malay</b>, or any mixture thereof, or any other <b>non-Caucasic</b> strains.</p>
West Virginia	No definitions.	Forbids sexual intercourse and marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes</b> . (Only the <b>white</b> party will be punished.)
Wyoming	No definitions.	Forbids marriage between <b>whites</b> and <b>Negroes, mulattoes, Mongolians, Malays.</b>

## Appendix 9. Nigger

### *Nigger*, the double-edged (s)word

*I'm a nigga but that's just the way I choose to act / It ain't got nothin' to do with bein' black. [...] Where I'm from there's a lot of white niggas.*

Song: Mnniiggaah, quoted in OED, s.v. 'nigger'.

I will not go into detail with every term this thesis is concerned with but the demonized N-word must be dealt with just because it is the one that has caused controversy the most. Some would like to see it banned altogether (eradicationists), also from academic discussions, and some would like to use it but only in a certain way. Also, this term is of a particular interest in the discussion of PC language since it straddles between the two extremes of the continuum (prescriptive v. descriptive) unlike any other term. In this chapter, I will touch upon the origins, the meaning, and the usages of this word as well as the opinions towards both the word itself and the usages.

*Nigger* has spread via the media all over the world, including South Africa and it is used in similar ways there. In future studies, it would be interesting to know whether the usages differ greatly from one another and whether their own term *kaffir* (their equivalent of *nigger*) works the same way.<sup>14</sup> However, this chapter is mainly applicable to the US.

#### (i) The different facets of the term

*Uh, two kikes. That's two kikes, and three niggers, and one spic. One spic – two, three spics. One mick. One mick, one spic, one hick, thick, funky, spunky boogey. And there's another kike. Three kikes. Three kikes, one guinea, one greaseball. Three greaseballs, two guineas. Two guineas, one hunky funky lace-curtain Irish mick. [...] The point? That the word's suppression gives it the power, the violence, the viciousness.*

Lenny Bruce (Cohen (ed.) 1970: 11).

As Randall Kennedy points out close to the beginning of his book *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word* (2002: 12), it should not be surprising that the N-word has constituted a major and menacing presence in the lives of black people considering the use of the term

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<sup>14</sup> According to *Online Etymology Dictionary* (s.v. 'kaffir'), it comes from the Arabic word *kafir* meaning 'infidel'. In theory, it means 'non-Muslim', but it usually refers to Christian (since Ottoman times). It was used as an equivalent for 'heathen' by early English missionaries who used it to refer to Bantus in South Africa (1792). From there it came to refer to all South African blacks regardless of ethnicity, and at least since 1934 it has been used as a term of abuse.

*nigger* by the whites throughout history. As a racial slur, *nigger* has become the epithet that generates epithets (*op. cit.* 27). This can be seen in many real life instances along with many portrayals of real life such as the one on Saturday Night Live by Richard Pryor and Chevy Chase (a word association test in a job interview):

“ ‘White,’ ” says Chase.  
“ ‘Black,’ ” Pryor replies.  
“ ‘Bean.’ ”  
“ ‘Pod.’ ”  
“ ‘Negro.’ ”  
“ ‘Whitey,’ ” Pryor replies lightly.  
“ ‘Tarbaby.’ ”  
“ ‘What did you say?’ ” Pryor asks, puzzled.  
“ ‘Tarbaby,’ ” Chase repeats, monotone.  
“ ‘Ofay,’ ” Pryor says sharply.  
“ ‘Colored.’ ”  
“ ‘Redneck!’ ”  
“ ‘Jungle bunny!’ ”  
“ ‘Peckerwood,’ ” Pryor yells.  
“ ‘Burrhead!’ ”  
“ ‘Cracker!’ ”  
“ ‘Spearchucker!’ ”  
“ ‘White trash!’ ”  
“ ‘Jungle bunny!’ ”  
“ ‘Honky!’ ”  
“ ‘Spade!’ ”  
“ ‘Honky, honky!’ ”  
“ ‘Nigger,’ ” says Chase smugly.  
“ ‘Dead honky!’ ” Pryor growls.

Pryor and Chase, SNL, Season 1, Episode 7  
(aired originally 13.12.1975).

*Nigger* is the term that crosses the line. Kennedy (*op. cit.* 38-39) states that the term has long been used in black folk humour. However, it was the Jewish comedian Lenny Bruce who was the first one to have *nigger* as a part of his stand-up act: in 1963, he thought that if Kennedy repeated the word enough times, its strength would fade and the meaning be lost. (It is no coincidence that he was Jewish since Jewish and black humour share many same traits such as self-deprecation.) In any case, Bruce was an early anomaly. The person, who truly changed the

scene, was Richard Pryor (although, later on, he was against the positive usage of the term).<sup>15</sup> Hence, from the 1970's onwards, *nigger* found its way into the routines of professional comedians (mostly blacks, but for example Louis C.K. uses it as a working class man of Irish descent which gives him more leeway; also self-deprecating). In movies, Spike Lee is a prominent figure who uses the term, but Quentin Tarantino is another (with some controversy since he is white).

But then, who can actually use the term, or, indeed, can any? It would seem that members of the same group have different rules from the rest of the crowd. We have all had instances where we can ridicule and belittle our family members, for example, but we cringe when we hear others do it. This applies to races, too: "[A] member of a race [is] privileged to address his racial kin in ways prescribed to others (Randall Kennedy 2002: 127)." Spike Lee has said that he has more right to use the term and many agree. Kennedy states three plausible theories for this: 1. "[T]he long and ugly history of white racist subordination of African Americans should in and of itself disqualify whites from using *nigger* (*op. cit.* 131)." 2. "[E]quity earned through oppression grants cultural ownership rights: having been made to suffer by being called *nigger* all these years, this theory goes, blacks should now be able to monopolize the slur's peculiar cultural capital (Rampersad 1997: 42, quoted in Randall Kennedy 2002: 131-132)." 3. "[W]hites lack a sufficiently intimate knowledge of black culture to use the word *nigger* properly (Randall Kennedy 2002: 132)."

People have been fired for using the term itself, but David Howard, the white director of a municipal agency in Washington, D.C. was accused of racism after he used the word *niggardly* ('stingy'). He ultimately resigned after a public outcry and the mayor of Washington, Anthony Williams, thought he had shown poor judgment. (Randall Kennedy 2002: 120, see section 2.4.1.) In 1993, Keith Dambrot, the basketball coach at Central Michigan University, used the term in the locker room with the permission of his African American players referring to a person that is fearless, mentally strong, and tough (Halberstam 1998: 261, cited in Kennedy 2002: 142). His teammates did not have a problem, but the word spread. He was subsequently fired. (Randall Kennedy 2002: 142-145.)

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<sup>15</sup> "Do you see any niggers?" "No." And he said: "You know why? Because there aren't any." (Pryor on the N-word.)

The term has been a matter of severe censorship. Many book titles have been changed. For example, Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Niggers* (1939) was retitled first as *Ten Little Indians* and finally as *And Then There Were None* (Randall Kennedy 2002: 115). (In Finnish, the original title was *Kymmenen pientä neekeripoikaa*.) There are also many censored versions of whole novels. I have bought a copy of *King Solomon's Mines* (by Sir H. Rider Haggard, 1885) that has been erased of every mention of *kaffir* and other non-PC terms (the publisher was South African). Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) is one of the most discussed novels in American literary history when it comes to *nigger*. Many of these eliminations overlook the context of both the era in which they have been written and the plot itself (*e.g.* in *Huckleberry Finn*, Huck and Jim form an interracial friendship and is an antiracist novel [*op. cit.* 139]). There are also dictionary issues: how should the severity of the word be explained and should it be eliminated completely. Some South African dictionaries have taken the elimination route whilst the American and British dictionaries represent as many sides of the term as possible (see section 2.1.2).

Anti-hate-speech movement in American schools has its downside: "In stressing "terror" of verbal abuse, proponents of hate-speech regulation have, ironically, empowered abusers while simultaneously weakening black students by counseling that they should feel grievously wounded by remarks that their predecessors would have shaken off or ignored altogether (Randall Kennedy 2002: 154)." The focus of wounding words makes us lose the forest for the trees since then we are worrying about **speech codes** rather than **coded speech** (United States v. Montgomery, 1994, cited in Randall Kennedy 2002: 157). Kennedy (2002: 159-160) states that eradicationists (the ones who want to eradicate the word entirely) fail to acknowledge both "the malleability of language" and "the complexity of African American communities". The proponents, regulationists, at least differentiate between racist and non-racist usages.

In 1837, Hosea Easton (quoted in Randall Kennedy 2002: 5) wrote *nigger* to be "an opprobrious term, employed to impose contempt upon [blacks] as an inferior race. [...] The term in itself would be perfectly harmless were it used only to distinguish one class of society from another; but it is not used with that intent. [...] [I]t flows from the fountain of purpose to injure." Spears (1997: 14) agrees that the term has long been a neutralised one amongst blacks (probably since the early days of Anglophone North America). However, *nigger*, or indeed *nigga*, as Spears emphasises, as a generalised reference, is something new: "White public school teachers hear themselves referred to as *that White nigga* or simply *nigga*, and Asian Americans in San

Francisco can be heard, as they navigate high school hallways, to call one another niggas; and the same is true of White students (Grant Wright, *p.c.*, quoted in Spears 1997: 14).” I have heard white Finnish school kids call one another with the Finnish equivalent *neekeri* in the sense of camaraderie, as well. All in all, the N-word has become to mean so many different things (neutral ‘dude’, ‘tough’ and ‘fearless’, ‘behaving badly’, borderline ‘criminal’, and the most negative racial slur there is, to mention a few) that nobody knows who is allowed to use it and how. *Nigga* seems to be the preferred term when used as a positive or neutral term, in which case the difference is politically important however so slight linguistically. As mentioned, many want to see the term eliminated completely, but since terms do not disappear if the subject matter is still relevant and up for discussion, the attempts to eliminate it ironically only give it more power.

(ii) A more personal account on the term: Coleman Collins

Coleman Collins is a black American basketball player who currently works in Ukraine. He wrote an article ‘Exporting the N-word’ on ESPN (2013) after some boys from Bosnia-Herzegovina greeted him with the term *nigga*. He felt insulted, but realised that the boys were not racist. In the article, he separates four schools of thought on the term. The first group is the largest and mostly comprised of black working-class people. They use it casually since that is what they have always done. The second is a group of middle-class black intellectuals who claim to have **reclaimed** the word and turned it into a term of endearment. This group, according to Collins, is small, but vocal. The third consists of largely middle- and upper-middle class, the “respectable Negroes”, as Collins puts it, who believe that racism would end if black people just pulled their pants up and stopped calling one another *nigga*. The last group is comprised of the older generation who fought for their rights and are against the term. They would want to bury the term. Collins also mentions the academics who claim that the term is fine when in context it is used without malice.

But what about the white boys in Europe? And the white players in European locker rooms who sing along with rap songs that have that term? Collins has come to the conclusion that many Europeans have never seen a black American person live, but depend on information coming from the media. When the American historical interracial background is taken out, all that is left is the word used as a term of endearment. Also, people who are familiar with the background and know someone who is black, think they “have a pass” to use that term. Collins disapproves



of this since he would not want the term to be used in any form. He still mentions that most people, including himself, think that the ones who definitely would get the pass are: people with a black parent. However, the line gets messy when we go outside the black/white binary. Are Latinos, or Indians black enough? What about Africans? I personally believe that at least Africans would be offended if they were not given the pass. The term expresses solidarity above all else when used without malice, as Collins, too, have noticed. Nevertheless, he prefers “to be called something else”. However, he tries to explain this quietly to anybody using the term since he thinks it can be addressed only on an individual level.

Another interesting aspect of the article is that Collins goes to great lengths to emphasise that words are not weapons and how they should not be treated as such: “The tools of enslavement were guns and ships and limited liability companies. Slavery doesn’t start with you calling me a nigger instead of sir; it starts when you have a gun and I have a sharpened stick. And it ends not with dictionaries or thesauruses, but with you putting down the gun.” He calls it a con game: I’ll respect you when... In this case when you stop using that term.

Collins concludes that it is unfortunate how the term has spread, but that it cannot be stopped anymore. The best approach in his opinion would be a sort of live-and-let-live one. However, he advises white people to still be extremely cautious. He pleads people not to use the term although he himself points out how hypocritical it is: “I just think that this thing, this one thing and **virtually nothing else in society**, is something you probably shouldn’t have.” However, he calls himself old (he was born in 1986) since he has heard that teenagers across the US of all races use it indiscriminately without anger. He also mentions how this would have been absolutely unthinkable only ten years ago and that maybe the future lies in nothing being off-limits to anyone.

I think this article is an intriguing mixture of both fight and acceptance or resignation. Collins was taught never to use the word and he would not want to hear it, but he lives in a world where that is impossible. The rules are changing rapidly and although he is only turning 28, he feels one with the older generation’s views. He seems to understand the importance of free speech and yet fights against it when it comes to this one term in the world. It seems as though he is trying to hold onto the good old past although nothing like that ever existed. When boys in Bosnia-Herzegovina and, indeed, in Finland are calling one another *nigger/nigga*, I think, in some odd way, it should be celebrated rather than reprimanded. If they can turn it into

something positive, why not? As I said, I have heard white Finnish boys calling one another *neekeri* in camaraderie and I have also heard of a situation where an immigrant in Finland from the Middle East was called that when he was a kid and he started to call his friends with that term: he managed to turn something ugly and racist into something positive and ridiculous at the same time and to defeat the cruelty. Also, when Collins states that words are not weapons, I might disagree. Obviously, they do not actually kill, but wars can start with words in the form of accusations and justifications. Words can be used to both fight and atone. But, the words themselves are innocent: we, the users, are to blame.